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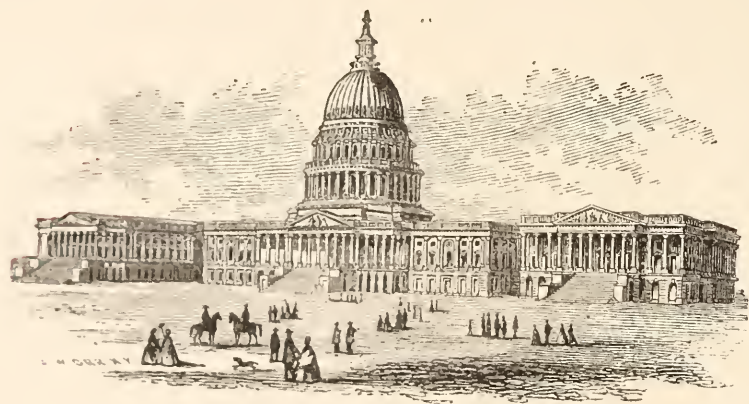
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THE

WASHINGTON SKETCH BOOK.

BY

V I A T O R .

[J. B. VARNUM]

NEW YORK:

MOHUN, EBBS & HOUGH, 189 BROADWAY.

WASHINGTON: BLANCHARD & MOHUN.

1864.

ENTERED, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1864, by
MOHUN, EBBS & HOUGH,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the
Southern District of New York.

JOHN F. TROW,
PRINTER, STEREOTYPED, AND ELECTROTYPED,
50 Greene Street, New York.

PREFACE.



THE writer of these pages had occasion, some years since, to peruse the discussions in Congress on the establishment of a Seat of Government. He afterward read a paper on the subject before the New York and Maryland Historical Societies, which was published in "Hunt's Merchant's Magazine," and went through two editions in pamphlet form. It has been so often referred to in other works on Washington that he has been induced to think a new edition in an abbreviated and more popular form would be acceptable, in connection with other articles and selections which have been published at various times in the "Knick-

erbocker Magazine," and "New York Observer."

Though not a guide book, a perusal will, it is believed, add much to the interest of a visit to Washington.

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WASHINGTON SKETCH BOOK.



I.

THE REBELLION.

THE Great Rebellion will invest Washington City with far more interest in the eyes of the American people than it has heretofore possessed. Though no battle may have been fought there, the scenes of which it was the theatre at the opening of the war will occupy the very first pages of the historian's record; and it was there that the larger portion of the people repaired to look upon the pomp and circumstance of war, and form their first and most lasting impressions. There, too, the great majority of the soldiers were first initiated into the mysteries of camp life, and of drill; and there probably much the larger number will have been gathered into the hospitals, and

either gone forth to remember forever the scene of their suffering, or been borne away to graves which their children will come to look upon.

The fields where fierce conflicts have taken place, will each, no doubt, be visited with peculiar interest; but attention will be divided among the number, while some of those of greatest note will be most accessible from Washington; and every man who has served, will, on his way, stop to point out to his companions the place in the Capitol, the Treasury, or other edifice, where he first spread his blanket upon the floor of stone; or to revisit the grass-grown fort where he braved the storms of winter; or the place where, with fifty thousand others, he passed in review.

II.

APRIL, 1861.

Who that was on the spot will ever forget the days he passed between the fall of Sumter and the arrival of the New York Seventh regiment? First came the startling account of the attack on the Massachusetts troops at Baltimore—then a long suspension of all news—no cars came or went—no mails—no telegraph—nothing but rumors of the wildest kind. Now we were told of an immense Rebel force coming to

Alexandria; "the rolling stock on the railroad" had "all gone to bring them up;" their mortars had been planted on Arlington heights, the city was to be shelled, the public buildings blown up, and the place left a ruin that the North might find it useless to fight for, and the South be saved the cost of defending it, yet obtain all the *éclat* in the eyes of foreign nations which the capture of the seat of Government could afford. The uprising of the North was known, but the troops—where were they? Now it was reported that steamers full of soldiers were coming up the river, and hundreds of spyglasses were pointed from the housetops to reveal nothing but the glassy surface, with scarce a ripple or a sail thereon; then came word that batteries had been planted at the White House bluff, commanding the channel, and there could be no hope from water transports. Every morning the question was anxiously put, whether any cars had come; and every evening a crowd collected round the depot to greet the Seventh regiment, which was now at Perryville—now at Annapolis—then at the Junction—would certainly be here to-night—then to-morrow—until at last many began to think it was a myth. An alarm of famine was raised: no supplies could come in from Maryland or Virginia; provisions of all kinds were

bought up at extravagant prices, much to the benefit of the grocers, who refused credit to anybody; and families were put on short allowance, as if we were in a state of siege, until the Government announced that a sufficient quantity of flour and salt meat had been stored to support a hundred thousand persons for ninety days. Long trains of wagons and carts traversed the streets at night, carrying arms, ammunition and food to the Patent Office, the Post Office, the Treasury and the Capitol, while the arches in the basements of the two last-named buildings were filled with firewood and other materials as barricades for musketry. The three or four batteries of regular troops, which had been ordered on before the war began, were kept constantly on the move, going to or returning from picket duty; and at all hours of the day horsemen were seen galloping from General Scott's headquarters in every direction, as if on the most urgent errands: while many of the strangers in the city formed a company to watch at the Navy Yard bridges by night. In almost every street the raw militia of the District were being drilled, with much distrust as to their loyalty. All this was new, unlike anything ever before seen by the lookers on, and consequently far more alarming than when, at a later day, they were surrounded by two

hundred thousand, for whose advent they had been gradually prepared. Property holders became objects of pity, under the impression they mostly entertained that their interests were becoming worthless—only “dwelling places for the bats and the owls.” Ordinary business was neglected, and people seemed to do nothing but walk the streets, looking anxiously in each other’s faces for words of cheer and comfort, hardly daring to ask questions lest they should hear of some new alarm. Some tried to look cheerful, but the effort was too apparent. A few boldly expressed the confidence they felt in the power and determination of the North, but were listened to with a smile of incredulity by those who reasoned that the South was prepared, but the North was not, and who had so long seen the former carry every point, that they could not realize the possibility of her failing now. One report had it that a plan was on foot by the secession mob to fire the town in many places at once, and, in the confusion, make it an easy conquest to an armed mob from Baltimore and Alexandria. Some, frightened out of their wits, fled from the city by every vehicle they could command at the most extravagant prices; others, obliged to remain, scarcely slept: but these were exceptions to the general rule, for the majority seemed to have made up their minds to await the result as

calmly as possible, satisfied that they could do nothing to change it. A conviction very generally prevailed that all hope for the Union was gone, and that those who had been friends were now turned to foes, engendering in every man a distrust of his neighbor.

III.

AFTER THE TROOPS ARRIVED.

WHEN the Seventh regiment actually did arrive, those who saw them marching up the Avenue one morning, could hardly credit their senses. Some waved handkerchiefs, many wept for joy, and those of secession proclivities looked on in silence, or sneered at them as "mere boys." But, as day after day new regiments made their appearance, astonishment was depicted on every countenance, and many of the hitherto silent ones suddenly discovered they had been good Union men from the start. A new excitement now arose. Everybody wished to see the fresh arrivals,—the Avenue became the scene of a daily spectacle, and, for the first time, the use of so wide a street for military evolutions began to be realized. Every public building, every warehouse was filled with troops. "There are twenty-five thousand men here, the city is safe," was the general remark,

and spirits rose in proportion. Every afternoon thousands, including beauty and fashion, went out on the Fourteenth street road to see the Seventh regiment parade at Camp Cameron. The reviews of the Rhode Islanders at the Patent Office, the Twelfth New York at Franklin Square, the Seventy-first New York at the Navy Yard, and the Marines at the Barracks, also drew together admiring crowds. Strangers began to come in to see the show, children were everywhere seen playing at soldiers in the streets—the ladies were delighted with the officer-beaux, and the strains of music from the numerous military bands. There seemed to be one continual drum-beat. People were awakened by the reveillé, walked with measured tread during the day, and were lulled by the tattoo at night. All seemed more like a grand gala season than a serious work of war.

Ere a month, another change had taken place. Over two hundred thousand soldiers were now collected in camps, which dotted every vacant space around the city. Among the residents the novelty had passed away, and immense processions scarce attracted notice; while the ears had become so accustomed to music, that the most melodious sounds were hardly heard, and the drum and fife were as much a matter of course, as the noise of the

omnibuses to an old New Yorker. Every hotel was full, every house occupied. All manner of tradesmen, chiefly in the sutler line, had taken possession of stores and shops. Property holders began to feel encouraged, or at least to think they were to have one more chance before the "owls" came in. The broad sidewalks could scarcely accommodate the throngs, while the intemperance and vice which follows in the wake of an army was only too apparent.

Grand reviews now took place on the "Champ de Mars," over by the Alms House, and more people visited that unpopulated part of the town in a day, than had been there before in fifty years. The Long Bridge, the Chain Bridge, Tenallytown, and the road to Alexandria became objects of intense interest. But there was no gala look about it. There was the pomp and circumstance, indeed, but the reality was brought home to all,—the fact that serious conflict was at hand.

And soon came the results, when the wounded and the dying and the stragglers from Manassas came in by thousands, and, for a few days, agony and disorder took the place of parade and drill. People had not yet become accustomed to such horrors.

But they did become accustomed even to that, when the next summer found Washington

one vast hospital, when the whole of the Judiciary Square, Douglas Row, the Lunatic Asylum, the City Hall, many churches, the Patent Office, the Capitol, and numerous country houses, were filled with the sick and the wounded, friends and foes together, when those who had previously acted as belles were called to act the part of nurses, and the resources of the benevolent all over the country were taxed to the utmost.

This, too, soon became an old story, and men spoke of the thousands in hospital with scarcely more concern than they had previously talked of hundreds. In future years, when all this becomes matter of history, they will wonder at the apathy with which they gazed upon the scene, and perhaps realize in some degree, how it was that the French Revolutionists became so inured to the work of terror, that they danced in the prisons, in sight of the tumbril.

IV.

WHAT THE SOLDIERS THOUGHT.

AND what was the impression made upon the military? In the midst of the state of suspense—after the fall of Sumter—a couple had walked along the Avenue to the Capitol, in-

tensely depressed by the long faces and anxious looks they encountered on either hand. Gazing on the unfinished dome, one of them remarked in a most desponding tone, "I wonder if it will ever be finished!" "Yes, *Ma'am!*" was the immediate reply, coming from a sentinel hitherto unnoticed, who was standing on the terrace above. He was one of the Massachusetts regiment which had passed through Baltimore on the 16th April, and had seen the first blood shed in the war. That this man should feel so confident of his position, was, as it were, a rebuke to us civilians for our want of faith, and the incident served to reassure those to whom it was related.

An officer of a regiment which was afterward quartered in the Capitol, said that some of the men were much surprised to find operatives at work upon that edifice. "We had hastened hundreds of miles to protect this building, and when we arrived we found men fluting columns and carving cornices, as if there were no thought of danger; and it was really a pleasant thing in the morning to hear the creak of the derrick, as it seemed to show that those on the spot and in power did not despair for the Republic;" when afterward it was proposed to suspend the work, one of the officers requested that it might be continued until his

men went away, as some of them would look upon it as a bad omen for the future.

A majority of the soldiers visited Washington for the first time when they came to defend it, and most of them experienced a sensation of intense disappointment as they marched up the dusty Avenue, and saw so little that was in keeping with their ideas of a city, as formed by the contrast with Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. For, although they did not expect to see a great city, they reasonably supposed that the place, as far as it went, would show something more in keeping with the public edifices than the scattered and cheap brick structures which, to a great extent, predominate.

“Hardly worth defending, except for the *éclât* of the thing,” said one. All understood perfectly well the importance of the place as the repository of archives, and, therefore, the symbol of the Government; but few seemed to attach any interest to it as the city founded by Washington, entirely the property of the nation, and identified in all its interests with the Union. Most of them, like the sentinel of the Capitol, felt that the national pride was involved in retaining and defending it against attack, and some probably felt, like him, that our self-respect as a people called upon us to finish the works we had begun, or at least not to be de-

tered from doing so by a minority of our own people. But little they thought of its past history and associations. And this is not to be wondered at. Our country has grown so rapidly that most men have had their thoughts upon the future rather than the past, and very naturally measured the value of everything by material interests, having little time to indulge in sentiment when working for bread. Those who read history may become posted as to the most important events which have attended upon our rise and progress ; but few read the details of any one event, as they are to be found only in official reports, or Congressional proceedings.

The establishment of a seat of Government was a most important event, and excited more dissension and sectional bitterness than any other topic except that of slavery ; and yet who cared to read those long discussions after the subject was finally settled, and, when other topics were still pending which threatened the very life of the nation. Even those living on the spot had, until of late years, hardly any information concerning those debates which preceded the establishment of the capital ; and some of the oldest citizens were unable to explain to the stranger the particular reasons which led to the selection of the site, and to the peculiar plan which was adopted ; why the streets were so

varied, the public buildings so separated, and where those buildings were intended to be.

It is a great pity that more had not been known on this subject, for we should not then have had the whole design marred by the blundering of ignorant commissioners or the rivalry and stupidity of architects. The large reservations in front and around the Capitol, which must now be repurchased at great cost, would not have been given away,—the ground from the Capitol to the Potomac would have been a park instead of a common,—the executive offices would have been ranged along the South side of that park, on the way to the President's, and the Treasury would not have been so placed as to hide its own beauties and shut out the White House from all the radiating streets. Washington would have been far more attractive to the stranger had the suggestions of its founders been taken into consideration. In fact, these suggestions seem to have been entirely forgotten, none of the commissioners of public buildings having regarded it as any part of their duty to preserve any of the recommendations of Washington, and L'Enfant, Endicott, or Latrobe, further than they were actually adopted by Congress.

Among the thousands who are called to Washington there are many men of taste and

reflection, who, in their abundance of leisure, cannot fail to have their curiosity excited on these points, and much good will result therefrom, in leading to the enlightenment of legislators and secretaries, and the correction of the errors which have been committed.

Whatever may be thought of the wisdom of selecting such a place for a capital, it is probable that, if the present troubles are ever healed, Washington will continue to be the seat of Government, since much greater difficulties exist in the way of a change than may at first thought be supposed.

A new spirit of enterprise has been started there by recent events, and it is to be hoped that it will lead to more judicious, as well as rapid systems of improvement, so as to make it a place more comfortable to the temporary sojourner, and more worthy the capital of a great nation.

V.

WHAT THE OLD CONGRESS DID ABOUT A SEAT OF GOVERNMENT.

BEFORE the adoption of the Constitution, the sessions of Congress were held according as the exigencies of the war, or the convenience of members from different sections required,

at Philadelphia, Baltimore, Lancaster, York, Princeton, Annapolis, Trenton, and New York. During this time, there appears to have been great anxiety and rivalry amongst the different States, for the honor of having this distinguished body in their midst. New York tendered the town of Kingston for the seat of Government; Rhode Island, Newport; Maryland, Annapolis; Virginia, Williamsburgh.

On the 21st of October, 1783, Congress had been insulted, at Philadelphia, by a band of mutineers, which the State authorities were unable to quell. On this occasion they adjourned to Princeton, where they held their sessions in the hall of the College; and it was probably owing to the recent disturbance, that the subject of a permanent seat of Government was taken up, and continued to be, at intervals, the subject of discussion up to the formation of the Constitution. The only light upon these discussions, is to be obtained from the numerous resolutions offered; the votes taken on which indicate that the question lay between the banks of the Delaware or those of the Potomac, "near Georgetown." On the 30th October, 1784, the subject was taken up by Congress, at Trenton, and after a long debate an ordinance was passed, appointing three commissioners with full power to lay out a district not exceed-

ing three, nor less than two miles square, on the banks of either side of the Delaware, not more than eight miles above or below the falls thereof, for a Federal town. They were authorized to purchase soil, and enter into contracts for erecting and completing, in an elegant manner, a Federal house, President's house, and houses for the Secretaries of Foreign Affairs, War, Marine, and Treasury ; that, in choosing the situations for the buildings, due regard be had to the accommodation of the States, with lots for houses for the use of their delegates respectively.

These commissioners never entered upon their duties, whether for lack of appropriations, or because of the numerous attempts which were made to repeal the act, or to substitute the Potomac for the Delaware, does not appear.

On the 10th of May, 1787, we find Massachusetts, New York, Virginia, and Georgia voting for, and New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland against a proposition of Mr. Lee, of Virginia, that the Board of Treasury take measures for erecting the necessary public buildings for the accommodation of Congress, at Georgetown, on the Potomac river, so soon as the soil and jurisdiction of the said town are obtained.

VI.

AFTER THE ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION.

THE discussions which had taken place in the old Congress, no doubt, had their influence upon the minds of those who framed that part of Section 8, Art. I. of the Constitution of the United States, which declares that Congress shall have power to exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever over such district (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular States, and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of Government of the United States, and to make all laws which may be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers.

This Article appears to have been assented to in the Convention without debate. In the Virginia Convention, some fears were expressed as to the influence to be exerted by a spot so exclusively under the control of Government, under the apprehension that it would be in some measure out of the pale of law, and an asylum for political criminals, or violators of State rights; but the clause was finally acceded to without much opposition.

After the adoption of the Constitution, New

York appropriated its public buildings to the use of the new Government, and Congress met in that city on the 6th of April, 1789. On the 15th of May following, Mr. White, from Virginia, presented to the House of Representatives a resolve of the Legislature of that State, offering to the Federal Government ten miles square of its territory in any part of that State which Congress may choose, as the seat of the Federal Government. On the next day, Mr. Seney, of Maryland, submitted a similar Act from that State. Numerous memorials and petitions followed, from citizens of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland, for the selection of a site in their respective States.

The resolve of the Virginia Legislature was accompanied by a resolution requesting the co-operation of Maryland in the effort to get the permanent seat of Government established on the banks of the Potomac; and offering in that case to "pass an act for advancing a sum of money not exceeding one hundred and twenty thousand dollars, to the use of the general Government, to be applied, in such manner as Congress shall direct, toward erecting public buildings, the Assembly of Maryland, on their part, advancing a sum not less than two fifths of the sum advanced by this State for the like purpose."

On the receipt of the Virginia resolution, the Assembly of Maryland passed a similar resolution, agreeing to cede the necessary territory, and to furnish seventy-two thousand dollars toward the erection of the public buildings.

New York and Pennsylvania had gratuitously furnished "elegant and convenient accommodations" for the use of the Government, during the eleven years that it was located within their respective limits, as appears from the resolutions passed by Congress on its removal. They had offered to continue to do so. New Jersey offered accommodations at Trenton. The citizens of Baltimore, through their representative, proposed to furnish money for the erection of the necessary buildings, in that "town," for the Federal Government.

The subject came up for discussion in Congress, on the introduction of a resolution by Mr. Thomas Scott of Pennsylvania, that it would be expedient to select a site which should be "as near as possible the centre of wealth, of population, and of territory." Mr. Lee afterward moved that a place as nearly central as a convenient communication with the Atlantic Ocean and an easy access to the Western territory will permit, ought to be selected, and established as the permanent Seat of Government of the United States." Long and exciting dis-

cussions followed, during that and the ensuing sessions, on the various resolutions and bills which were offered, involving great bitterness and sectional jealousy.

Almost all were agreed that New York was not a suitable place, not being sufficiently central. There was much division of sentiment as to the relative advantages of Philadelphia and Germantown, in Pennsylvania; Havre de Grace and a place called Wright's Ferry on the Susquehanna; Baltimore on the Patapsco, and Conogocheague, on the Potomac. The two last were almost equally balanced for some time in the number of supporters. It was remarked, by one of the members for Maryland that the people of the State were in the situation of Tantalus, uncertain which to prefer, the Susquehanna or the Potomac. Mr. Carroll strongly advocated the latter. Mr. Seney noticed sundry measures of the Legislature of Maryland which evinced, he said, their determination to support the pretensions of the Susquehanna. Mr. Smith set forth the advantages of Baltimore, and the fact that its citizens had subscribed \$40,000 for public buildings. The South Carolinians offered an apparently whimsical objection to Philadelphia, to wit: the number of Quakers who, they said, were eternally dogging the Southern members with their schemes of emancipation.

Others ridiculed the idea of building palaces in the woods. Mr. Gerry, of Massachusetts, thought it highly unreasonable to fix the seat of Government in such a position as to have nine States out of the thirteen to the northward of the place, and adverted to the sacrifice the northern States were ready to make in being willing to go as far south as Baltimore. Mr. Page said New York was superior to any place he knew for the orderly and decent behavior of its inhabitants.

On the 3d of September, 1789, Mr. Goodhue, of Massachusetts, said in a debate, that the eastern and northern members had made up their minds on the subject, and were of opinion that, on the eastern banks of the Susquehanna, Congress should fix its permanent residence.

Two days after, a resolution passed the House of Representatives, "that the permanent Seat of the Government of the United States ought to be at some convenient place on the banks of the Susquehanna, in the State of Pennsylvania."

On the introduction of the bill to carry this resolution into effect, much feeling was manifested by the southern members, and particularly by those from Virginia, who earnestly contended that the banks of the Potomac was the

most suitable location. Mr. Madison thought if the proceeding of that day had been foreseen by Virginia, that State might not have become a party to the Constitution. The place where the Seat of Government should be fixed, was allowed by every member to be a matter of great importance. "The future tranquillity and well-being of the United States," said Mr. Scott, "depended as much on this as on any question that ever had or could come before Congress." Mr. Fisher Ames remarked that "every principle of pride, and honor, and even of patriotism, was engaged."

The bill was passed by the House by a vote of ayes thirty-one, noes nineteen. It was amended in the Senate by striking out all that part respecting the Susquehanna, and inserting a clause fixing the permanent Seat of Government at Germantown, Pennsylvania, and also providing that the law should not be carried into effect until the State of Pennsylvania, or individual citizens of the same, should give security to pay one hundred thousand dollars to be employed in erecting the public buildings. These amendments were agreed to by the House, with a proviso that the laws of Pennsylvania should continue in force in said district until Congress should otherwise direct. The bill was then returned to the Senate, and the consideration of

the amendment of the House was postponed until the next session. Germantown, therefore, was actually agreed upon by both Houses ; but the bill failed on account of a slight amendment.

On the 28th of June, a bill, which had long been under consideration, was amended by inserting "on the river Potomac, at some place between the mouths of the eastern branch and the Connogocheague." A motion to insert Baltimore instead of the Potomac was negatived by a vote of 37 to 23. The act was finally passed on the 16th of July, 1790. It is entitled, "An Act establishing the temporary and permanent Seat of Government of the United States," the word "temporary" referring to Philadelphia, where the Congress were to hold their sessions until 1800, when, as Mr. Wolcott expressed it, "they were to go to the Indian place with the long name, on the Potomac."

By an amendatory act, passed March 3, 1791, so much of the act as requires the whole district to be located above the mouth of the Eastern Branch is repealed, and the President is authorized to make any part of the territory below the said limit, and above the mouth of Hunting Creek, a part of said district, so as to include a convenient part of the Eastern Branch, and of the lands lying on the lower side there-

of, and also the town of Alexandria, provided that no public buildings be erected otherwise than on the Maryland side of the Potomac.

VII.

LOG ROLLING.

THE passage of the act seems to have been brought about by a species of log rolling, some of the Southern members having been, by this act, induced to vote for assumption. Mr. Jefferson, in one of his letters,* gives an interesting account of it. *It will be observed that secession was talked of at that day.*

“The great and trying question (the assumption of the State debts) was lost in the House of Representatives. So high were the feuds excited by this subject, that on its rejection, business was suspended. Congress met and adjourned from day to day without doing anything, the parties being too much out of temper to do business together. The eastern members particularly, who, with Smith from South Carolina, were the principal gamblers in these scenes, threatened *secession and dissolution*.—Hamilton was in despair. As I was

* Memoirs and Correspondence of Jefferson, vol. iv. pp. 448, 449.

going to the President's one day, I met him in the street. He walked me backward and forward before the President's door for half an hour. He painted pathetically the temper into which the legislature had been wrought; the disgust of those who were called the creditor States; the danger of the secession of their members, and the separation of the States. He observed that the members of the administration ought to act in concert; that, though this question was not of my department, yet a common duty should make it a common concern; that the President was the centre on which all administrative questions ultimately rested, and that all of us should rally around him, and support, with joint efforts, measures approved by him; and that the question having been lost by a small majority only, it was probable that an appeal from me to the judgment and discretion of some of my friends might effect a change in the vote, and the machine of government now suspended might be again set in motion. I told him that I was really a stranger to the whole subject, and, not having yet informed myself of the system of finance adopted, I knew not how far this was a necessary sequence; that undoubtedly, if its rejection endangered a dissolution of our Union at this incipient stage, I should deem that the most unfortunate of all

consequences, to avert which, all partial and temporary evils should be yielded.

“I proposed to him, however, to dine with me the next day, and I would invite another friend or two, bring them into conference together, and I thought it impossible that reasonable men, consulting together coolly, could fail, by some *mutual sacrifices of opinion, to form a compromise* which was to save the Union. The discussion took place. I could take no part in it but an exhortatory one, because I was a stranger to the circumstances which should govern it. But it was finally agreed to, that whatever importance had been attached to the rejection of this proposition, the preservation of the Union and of concord among the States was more important, and that therefore it would be better that the vote of rejection should be rescinded, to effect which, some members should change their votes. But it was observed that this pill would be peculiarly bitter to the southern States, and that *some concomitant measure should be adopted to sweeten it a little to them*. There had before been a proposition to fix the Seat of Government either at Philadelphia or at Georgetown on the Potomac; and it was thought that by giving it to Philadelphia for ten years, and to Georgetown permanently afterward, this might, as an anodyne, calm in

some degree the ferment which might be excited by the other measure alone. So two of the Potomac members (White and Lee, but White with a revulsion of stomach almost convulsive) agreed to change their votes, and Hamilton undertook to carry the other point. In doing this, the influence he had established over the eastern members, with the agency of Robert Morris with those of the middle States, effected his side of the agreement, and so the assumption was passed."

But whatever might have been the immediate agency for the passage of the act, it must not be supposed that those who advocated the Potomac side of the question were without other reasons, which were certainly plausible, if not conclusive. They will be referred to in another place.

VIII.

DOGGEREL.

THE Connogocheague is a stream in Washington county, Maryland. Much sport was made of this name; in fact the New York papers abound in squibs and doggerel on the subject. In one, a servant girl, after announcing to her friend that

“Since you writ us,
The congress and court have determined to quit us.

proceeds to describe her master's indignation
as follows :—

“He hopes and he prays they may die in a stall,
If they leave us in debt for Federal Hall.
In fact he would rather saw timber or dig,
Than see them removing to Connogocheague,
Where the houses and kitchens are yet to be framed,
The trees to be felled, and the streets to be named.”

The following illustrates the feeling which
existed in relation to the prominent men who
took part in the debates :—

VIRGINIA TO MASSACHUSETTS.

DEAR Sedgwick, give over the making a bother
About the Potomac, about the Potomac;
We speak not in fun, 'tis as sure as a gun
You there shall smoke shoemack, you there shall
smoke shoemack!

And you, Mr. Gerry, be not quite so merry
About Connogocheague, about Connogocheague;
For your dull, punning jeers, your mobs and your fears,
We care not a fig, we care not a fig!

It is, sir, at Georgetown that you shall be set down,
In spite of your canting, in spite of your canting;
When there we'll assure you of your hectic to cure you;
No more of your ranting, no more of your ranting!

Ye grave, learned asses, so fond of molasses,
You're fairly outwitted, you're fairly outwitted;
With this Georgetown motion—oh dear! what a potion—
In the teeth you'll be twitted, in the teeth you'll be
twitted!

You talk of your dying, with sobs, and with sighing,
If you go to Potomac, if you go to Potomac;
But the North we'll confound, when we send you home
sound,—
And you shall smoke shoemack, and you shall smoke
shoemack!

MASSACHUSETTS TO VIRGINIA.

Ye Noddies! how noozled, perplexed and bamboozled
Are ye of Potomac, are ye of Potomac;
Ye had better be found at your homes safe and sound
A smoking of shoemack, a smoking of shoemack!

The Union you'd sever, for sake of your river,
And give up assumption, and give up assumption;
There's White, and there's Lee, and there's Maryland G.,
Wise men all of gumption, wise men all of gumption.

Then there's Daniel Carroll, who looks like a barrel
Of Catholic faith, sir! of Catholic faith, sir!
He swore he was true, but the bung, sir, it flew,
And went off in a breath, sir! went off in a breath, sir!

Virginia! give over the making a pother
About the Potomac, about the Potomac;
For, although you have got it, assumption shall rot it,
And smoke you like shoemack, and smoke you like
shoemack!

IX.

SHOULD THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT BE A
COMMERCIAL CAPITAL?

THIS was one of the most prominent questions discussed in the debates and pamphlets of the day (1789-1790). Madison and others took the negative side. They argued that, if Congress could be supposed to have any option about exercising the power of exclusive legislation, given in the Constitution, there could be no doubt as to the expediency of exercising it. The provision was suggested by the history of all European capitals, as being essential to bestow dignity and independence on the Government. "Without it, not only the public authority might be insulted, and its proceedings be interrupted with impunity, but a dependence of the members of the General Government on the State comprehending the Seat of Government, for protection in the exercise of their duty, might bring on the national councils an imputation of awe or influence, equally dishonorable to the Government, and dissatisfactory to the other members of the confederacy. The consideration has the more weight, as the gradual accumulation of public improvements at the stationary residence of Government, would

be too great a public pledge to be left in the hands of a single State, and would create so many obstacle; to a removal of the Government, as still further to abridge its necessary independence." *

A great obstacle to the exercise of the control in a large commercial community, would be found in the mixed character of the population, and the many elements of discord which existed there. It could readily be foreseen that, in the midst of a dense and excitable mercantile population, such disturbances would frequently occur in times of high party feeling, or during any period of stagnation in business, when the unemployed multitudes could easily be aroused, by real or imaginary grievances, to overcome all opposition, and stay the operations of Government.

To check such influences, would impose upon the country the necessity of maintaining a strong military power at the capital, which it was desirable to avoid, it being no part of our policy to keep on foot a large standing army. Another reason for avoiding a seaport city, would be found in the greater variety and importance of the local objects for which Congress would be called upon to legislate, to the neglect of national affairs; and in the apprehension,

* Federalist.

then generally entertained, that the local expenditures and influence of the different departments, which, in themselves, could afford no reasonable ground of alarm, might, in connection with the wealth and power of such a city, operate greatly to the injury of other places. London and Westminster were mentioned as cases in point; though they, unitedly, sent but six members to Parliament, they had more influence in the measures of Government, by their commercial importance, than the whole empire beside. It would become a favored city, and the Government funds, largely disbursed there, would give it advantages, in point of capital, possessed by few others. A remark of Sir James Macintosh was extensively quoted, "that a great metropolis is to be considered as the heart of a political body—as the focus of its powers and talents—as the direction of public opinion, and, therefore, as a strong bulwark in the cause of freedom, or as a powerful engine in the hands of an oppressor;" and it had come to be considered that one of the surest ways to prevent our capital's becoming the latter, would be to deprive it of the elective franchise. There were obvious reasons why those who lived under the immediate shadow of the Government might exert a greater influence over the country by their votes and opinions, than the

same number who lived elsewhere. Many, at a distance, might suppose that those so situated would have a better opportunity to scan the conduct of their rulers; and the result of the election would, on this account, be, by the successful party, heralded from one end of the Union to the other, while, in reality, it would become the seat of all manner of rival factions, in which the officers of Government would mingle, and be tempted and enabled to use the power in their hands for purposes of corruption with more facilities and less fear of detection than if obliged to go abroad and operate in other places. The city should never be branded with the name of any one political party, but be regarded as neutral ground, where all parties might meet, and be received on equal terms by the residents.

There would be excitement enough attendant upon the ordinary business of legislation, without adding thereto the turmoil and strife of popular elections. Now, would any great commercial emporium be willing to give up this privilege, considered by Americans so invaluable, for the sake of having the Government in their midst? Certainly not; nor would it be desirable that they should, since their voice in the public councils would be important. There would necessarily be, in all these places,

branches of the Government, such as custom houses and naval stations, which were quite as much as it was desirable to concentrate in any one commercial community.

This reasoning, so far as it relates to the disadvantages of a commercial city, probably had reference more especially to a seaport. It will be seen by the discussions on the other branches of the subject, that the location was not regarded as destitute of advantages for trade. The objection was to making the same a commercial as well as a political capital.* Yet the plans subsequently adopted show that a large city was expected to grow up around the residences of the Government. Everything was on a scale

* Mr. Jared Sparks, in a letter to the author, after the publication of some former remarks on this subject, says: "I doubt if the members of Congress generally, in their discussions of this subject, looked forward to a great commercial city as the new Seat of Government. But I am inclined to think that Washington's anticipations were more sanguine than events have justified. He early entertained very large and just ideas of the vast resources of the West, and of the commercial intercourse that must spring up between that region and the Atlantic coast; and he was accustomed to regard the central position of the Potomac as affording the most direct and easy channel of communication. Steamboats and railroads have since changed the face of the world, and have set at defiance all the calculations founded on the old order of things; and especially have they operated on the destiny of the West, and our entire system of internal commerce, in a manner that could not have been possibly foreseen in the lifetime of Washington.

which could only be developed to advantage by a population of half a million, and great individual wealth; and such communities are as liable to the outbreaks of a mob, however far inland, as any upon the coast, since so large a population must always comprise all ranks and conditions of people. This is plainly enough seen in the case of Paris—a city which may be said to have been the creation of Government, having been selected in ancient days because the island on the Seine was more easily fortified. So far as all the ordinary elements of growth were concerned, Rouen, farther down on the navigable part of the river, presented far greater advantages. Yet Paris is France, and its mob have again and again overturned the Government, and changed the destinies of the nation. Still it is hardly probable that any city founded on the same position at the present day, would ever achieve such commercial as well as political supremacy as Paris.

When that city was begun, the Government was everything, and commerce but secondary to the prosperity of a nation; now commerce is everything, and Government is secondary. Then the island in the Seine offered the most secure refuge for the king and court, and where they were, all the wealthy and the noble of the land were gathered, and around them congre-

gated the beginnings of arts and commerce, which gave the city a start it has ever since retained. In more modern times the Spanish Government undertook to establish a capital at Madrid, and all that courtly expenditures could do has been done, yet Madrid is behind other places in the kingdom which had more natural advantages. The utmost that the advocates of a city on the Potomac could have expected, must have been that it would increase by degrees to be a large inland town, having a healthy trade and manufacture, yet not so important in that regard as to give it a supremacy over New York and Philadelphia. And, although they may not have anticipated anything to compare with the luxury and splendor of European courts, they doubtless overestimated the attractions of the Government and Congress in bringing hither a large proportion of the retired and wealthy of other cities, who would contribute to the improvement of the place, and give it a population *sui generis* as it were, differing in its attributes from those of other cities. Constituted, as the country is, of States, in many respects independent of each other, it was certainly desirable to avoid giving to any one State the superior importance which it might have derived from having the commercial as well as political

capital in its midst; and, for the same reason, there seems to be much force in the argument for placing the capital, wherever it should be, under the national control, and depriving it of the elective franchise.

If we consider the extent to which party feeling was carried in the canvass that immediately preceded Mr. Jefferson's election, when private social relations were, in some instances, almost entirely suspended between families of different political parties, we can realize what serious evil such a state of things would be at the capital, should it again recur, and be fostered by continual local elections, accompanied with all the excitement and misrepresentation which we now see every four years in the principal cities of the Union, and in the midst of which it is not too much to suppose that the position of public officers might subject them to annoyance and insult in a thousand ways, even without actual violence. And, from similar experience, it is obvious that the votes of those in the public employ might be directly or indirectly controlled by the Government, so that there would be, in reality, but little freedom of choice. Indeed, the necessity of absolute control in Congress has never been questioned, and few have ever contended for giving the elective franchise.

These two things, the absolute control of congress, and the absence of the elective franchise would probably in any community, go far to insure protection against mob influence; and just as far in the commercial capital as in any other large city; under such checks, a great metropolis, with the opportunities it furnishes for the contact of mind with mind, and for acquiring information in every department, would certainly seem likely to exercise a good influence on the legislators, and to prove, in most cases, a "strong bulwark in the cause of freedom," rather than "a powerful engine in the hands of the oppressor," to borrow the language before quoted of Sir James Macintosh.

In London, or rather in Westminster, and in Paris, the local control has always been substantially in the Government; but both places have the right of electing members of the legislature, which could not well be denied to cities of such immense importance; yet in neither country has the great influence of these capitals excited that jealousy which would have existed had the nation been composed of a number of smaller States, each claiming in certain things to be independent, and a rival of the others. Every Englishman looks from his country home upon London as the centre of everything. Liverpool and Manchester are

content to acknowledge the supremacy of the great metropolis. So in France, every Frenchman, however highly he may estimate his native city in the provinces, points with pride to Paris as indeed the concentration of all that is grand and glorious in France. It has indeed been the focus from which every revolution has begun, but, in most cases, those revolutions have represented the sentiment of the provinces, and, where that was not the case, it is probable that, with similar misgovernment, or ambitious military chiefs, they would have taken place, had the seat been anywhere else than in Paris; but, even admitting that the leaders of the *émeutes* found stronger allies in the half-starved mobs than they would have found elsewhere, it is questionable whether the centralization of power at Paris, has not been, on the whole, of benefit to the nation, in insuring a more efficient Government for the time being.

In America we see a very different state of things. Not only is the country many times larger than France, but every section, not to say every State, has from the earliest period had some different city as its centre. New York is rapidly becoming, if it is not already, the great centre of finance and commerce for all; but its progress has been viewed with a jealous eye by the neighboring cities, whose trade it

has been gradually taking away. What New Englander who does not take most of his ideas along with his newspapers, from Boston? Will the inhabitants of Pennsylvania or Delaware ever cease to enlarge upon the clean streets, the good butter, and the supremacy in all manufactures of Philadelphia? The Western man will dwell in like manner upon the wonderful facilities for continued growth of St. Louis; and the Southerners have always felt that Charleston and New Orleans were destined to take the lead, with the cotton and rice of the one, and the outlet of the Mississippi at the other. Does it need any argument to show how difficult it would be to reconcile these different and contending interests to the concentration in any one of the places named of the immense number of offices and the enormous patronage of the Government?

Some of these considerations apply to State capitals, which have too frequently been selected with reference rather to centre of territory than of convenience. The residence of State officers and of the Legislature at such a town as Harrisburg or Lansing, is of great advantage to the place, but would add very little to the influence of Philadelphia or Detroit, while the State at large would be benefited by the change. The executive departments of the State Govern-

ments, in ordinary times, are so simple in their operations, and the number of officers so small, that their influence or power in a large city cannot be an object of jealousy to smaller places; while the member from the country who passes a few weeks there during the session of the Legislature, cannot fail to have his knowledge enlarged, so as to legislate with more discrimination.

While, therefore, we can find but little weight in the arguments against a commercial capital for a consolidated nation, or for a State, we do not well see how a commercial capital could have been selected for the United States, without either giving it undue influence, or depriving it of privileges enjoyed by others.

X.

WHETHER A CITY SHOULD BE FOUNDED.

ANOTHER argument urged by the advocates of the Potomac site was that it was highly expedient that a city should be laid out expressly for this purpose, so that there would be ample provision for all public edifices for centuries to come. It is true that abundance of ground for the public buildings could have been at that time obtained in or about Philadelphia or Baltimore, but they would have then been either all concentrated in one point, and somewhat cir-

cumscribed in respect to room and choice of situation ; or, if more scattered, there would be a difficulty in forming that appropriate connection between them which would be essential to unity and beauty of design ; and, after all, it would be a mere suburb to the city. Besides, a thousand objects might from time to time call for the erection of new edifices, which could not at present be anticipated, without keeping vacant for years, at great loss of interest to the Government, and to the detriment of the city, large tracts of land in the best position, which, in the hands of individuals, would be built upon and improved. On the other hand, in a place that increased chiefly in proportion as the sphere of the executive department was enlarged, the lots of ground would seldom be available to any individual before they were required for public purposes, and the cost to the Government would be comparatively trifling, while there would be an opportunity to devise a plan expressly for the public accommodation, to which purpose every part of the city would be subservient.

In any existing city, the large number of men of wealth, who could command the best positions, would at once raise the price of land to a degree which would render it almost impossible for the officers of Government to live in a style of decent respectability suited

to their stations, upon the moderate salaries with which it was the policy to commence the Government, and which were called for at all times, as well to diminish the attractions of office, as from a regard to the simplicity of our republican institutions ; whereas, in the absence of a preëxisting population, a style and fashion of living would commence, which would to a considerable extent prevail thereafter, and be conformed to by the more wealthy classes who should afterward come there to reside.

It is obvious that these arguments, if they have any force, are not to be applied to times like the present, when the exigencies of war overturn all plans formed in time of peace.

It was, at one time, suggested as expedient to require a cession of soil, as well as of jurisdiction, under the idea that the State or States would find it an object to purchase the territory and present it, for the sake of having the Government in their midst ; while, on the other hand, the income from the sale of lots would furnish a fund for the erection of public edifices, and the improvement of the place ; but this was pronounced out of the question with regard to places where any considerable population had already collected : to all of which, Mr. Carroll's remarks in regard to Baltimore would apply. "He believed if Congress were dis-

posed to fix on that town, it would be agreeable to the State ; but he did not imagine they would agree to give Government a property to the whole town and the surrounding country. The other parts of the State had never contemplated making Baltimore a compensation for such an immense property."

In selecting a place not previously occupied, the object of the Government would be accomplished whether the States conveyed the soil or not, since the cost of the purchase would be comparatively small.

XI.

WHERE SHOULD IT BE?

WITH respect to position, it was said that while a central point should be preferred, "it ought to be a centre uniting convenience with utility ; the heart should be so placed as to propel the blood to the extremities, with the most equable and gentle motion."

There is no common centre. Territory has one centre, population another, and wealth a third. The centre of population is variable, and a decision on that point now, might establish a seat of Government at a very inconvenient place for the next generation. The same remark may be made in this country with re-

gard to territory. With the rapid increase of States, we should find it necessary to remove the capital every fifty years, unless we anticipated the future extent of our country by placing it where it would be, in the meantime, far beyond the centre of population and convenience.

A centre of wealth is open to greater objections. The centre of a sea-coast line ought to be regarded because it is more conveniently accessible, has more wealth and more people than an equal area of inland country. Being more liable to invasion on that quarter, Government should be near to protect it. It is also the interest of the back country to have the Government near the sea, to inspect and encourage trade, by which their abundant produce will find an export. When the central line between the northern and southern extremities was fixed, no person in the western territory had ever wished anything further than that congress should establish their seat as far back on this line, as the convenience of maritime commerce would allow.

This centre of a sea-coast line falls between the rivers Potomac and Susquehanna; the place between the Potomac and Eastern Branch would admit of a navy yard, and was yet so far inland as to be, in some measure, protected

from sudden attack. The Potomac, Will's Creek, and Youghogany, could be connected by canal navigation, and, descending the latter, you come to the Monongahela, which meets the Alleghany, and forms the Ohio. Its immediate vicinity to two flourishing inland towns would give it some of the benefits of their prosperity, without the evils before mentioned as incident to a large commercial emporium; since the inland trade would bring into them a different class of population from that which throngs our seaport towns—one accustomed to the institutions of the country, and more disposed to the preservation of good order. This, too, it was thought, would be a security against the place becoming slavishly dependent upon congress, giving it a healthy trade, but not one which would supersede entirely the advantages derived from the presence of Government.

The growth of the western country was anticipated, and depicted in glowing colors by some of the members of that day. "If," said Mr. Madison, "the calculation be just, that we double in twenty-five years, we shall speedily behold an astonishing mass of people on the western waters. * * * We see the people moving from the more crowded to the less

* See Mr. Smith's remarks in debate. Gales and Seaton's Debates, O. S., vol. ii. p. 960.

crowded parts. The swarm does not come from the southern, but from the northern and eastern hives. This will continue to be the case until every part of America receives its due share of population. If there be any event upon which we may calculate with certainty, I take it that the centre of population will rapidly advance in a southwesterly direction. It must, then, travel from the Susquehanna, if it is now found there—it may even extend beyond the Potomac—but the time will be long first; and, as the Potomac is the great highway of communication between the Atlantic and the western country, attempts to remove the seat must be impossible.”

“I confess,” said Mr. Vining, “to the House and to the world, that, viewing this subject in all its circumstances, I am in favor of the Potomac. I wish the Seat of Government to be fixed there, because I think the interest, the honor, and the greatness of the country require it. I look on it as the centre from which those streams are to flow, that are to animate and invigorate the body politic. From thence, it appears to me, that the rays of Government will naturally diverge to the extremities of the Union. I declare that I look on the Western territory from an awful and striking point of view. To that region the unpolished sons of

earth are flowing from all quarters—men to whom the protection of the laws, and the controlling force of Government, are equally necessary. From this consideration, I conclude that the banks of the Potomac is the proper situation.”

It is true that, at the time these remarks were made, the Union comprised but thirteen States; and, probably, no one anticipated that the number of States would double in fifty years, whatever might be the population; but the centre of population has not travelled westward as rapidly as many suppose.

According to a table, calculated by Dr. Patterson, of the United States Mint, in 1840, the centre of population was then in Harrison county, Virginia, thirty-eight miles south of the Pennsylvania line, five miles due south of Clarksburgh—being twenty-one miles north of Washington, one hundred and seventy-five miles west, and one hundred and seventy-seven miles in a straight line. At that time the average progress westward, since 1790, during each ten years, had been about thirty-four miles. This average is slightly increasing; and if we set it down at fifty miles, it will require nearly a century to carry this centre five hundred miles west of Washington, or as far as the city of Nashville, Tennessee.

The comparatively small importance which was attached to "the centre of territory," as a criterion by which to select a capital, will strike many with surprise; and it is worthy of observation, that Mr. Madison, in presenting the importance of such a centre in what he thought the most prominent point of view, remarked that, "if it were possible to promulgate our laws by some instantaneous operation, it would be of less consequence where the Government might be placed"—a contingency which now seems to be supplied by the "magic wires" of Morse, which communicate intelligence, "not merely with the swiftness of lightning," but "by lightning itself."

In the course of a debate in the United States Senate on the retrocession of Alexandria, Mr. Calhoun remarked, "that a moment's attention to the Seats of Government in the different countries of the world would show that they very rarely occupied a central position. They were generally situated on a frontier that was most exposed, near to those places where the armies would be required to be encamped for the protection of the country against invasion. Look over Europe. Where was London situated? Near the southeast frontier. Where was the capital of France? Far from central. Where was the capital of Russia? Upon the

frontier; and the same locality will be found to prevail, and very properly so, in regard to capitals throughout the world. And if it were true in general, it was eminently true in respect to our confederation. Our capital had been placed here, very wisely in his judgment, and he believed it would always continue here as long as there was a necessity for a Seat of Government. If it were removed, the change would proceed from some other cause than the necessity of securing a more central position. The attendance of members might be found inconvenient and oppressive."

Here followed a defence of the much talked of mileage abuse.

"He would here remark that there was a wise provision in the statute book—a provision for the allowance of mileage to members for the expense of travel. As long as that law prevailed, the Representatives of the most distant quarters would stand in as eligible a position as those of the nearest. They ought to be paid in a proportion equal to the square of the distance travelled. It was an error to suppose that the mere extent of the intervening distance should be paid. Greater distance should be paid a higher rate; because distance disturbed all social relations, broke in upon the comforts of families, and robbed them of the enjoyment of home, it

should therefore be liberally compensated. He was convinced that no one here, as far as he was individually concerned, desired a removal of the Seat of Government."

Whenever any project for removal has been agitated, as was often the case after the war of 1814, the subject was found to be surrounded with embarrassment. Where should it go? All the great cities of the West presented claims. Should Congress govern, wherever it went? Should those who had invested at Washington, upon the faith of the language of the act that it was to be permanent at Washington, be indemnified in any way?

These were only a few of the questions which arose, and since the era of telegraphs and railroads the subject has been dropped by common consent. If any change takes place now, it will be in consequence of the division of the nation. In that event it would perhaps be too far south for the northern section, and too far north for the southern.

There is no force whatever in the arguments recently brought forward in favor of a change, based on the cost of defending it; for, if the Union is restored, we must assume that a necessity of defending against our own citizens will not again occur, otherwise the restoration can amount to nothing.

Let us hope that the anticipations of its founders may be realised.

“Capitoli immobile saxum.”

XII.

HOW THE GROUND WAS BOUGHT.

NOTHING has been hitherto said of the agency which Gen. Washington had in procuring the passage of the act establishing “the residence,” as it was sometimes called, on the Potomac. But there can be no doubt that the President’s influence had great weight, and an immense pile of correspondence attests the interest he took in everything which pertained to the establishment of the Government here. He conducted in person many of the negotiations with the proprietors of the farm lands, and some anecdotes are related of his conferences with David Burns, whose residence was on the ground south of the President’s house, and was up to quite a recent period standing, as an appurtenance to the elegant mansion of his son-in-law, Gen. Van Ness. His remains, with those of his daughter, son-in-law, and other members of his family, are in a mausoleum which will attract the attention of those who attend the church of the Ascension in H street, being be-

tween that church and the orphan asylum, for both of which the land was given by Mrs. Van Ness. Washington alluded to him in one of his letters as "the obstinate Mr. Burns," and it is related that when the President was dwelling upon the advantage he would derive from the sale, the old man replied, "I suppose you think people here are going to take every grist that comes from you as pure grain, but what would you have been, if you hadn't married the widow Custis?"

The other proprietors were Notley Young, who occupied a fine old brick mansion near the present steamboat landing, only destroyed within a few years, to make room for a street, Daniel Carroll, whose spacious establishment known as the Duddington Mansion, is still standing on a public square, a little southeast of the Capitol, and Samuel Davidson. On the 31st of March, 1791, Washington writes to Mr. Jefferson from Mount Vernon, announcing the conclusion of his negotiations. The terms were in brief as follows: the owners conveyed all their interest to the United States, on consideration that when the whole should be surveyed and laid off as a city, the original proprietors should retain every other lot. The remaining lots to be sold by the Government from time to time, and the proceeds to be applied toward the improvement of

the place in grading and making streets, erecting bridges, and providing such other conveniences as the residence of the Government required. For such ground as should be retained by Government for public use, for squares, walks, &c., the proprietors were to be paid £25 per acre; but they were to be allowed nothing for the ground taken for streets and alleys.

The ground to which this agreement related, comprised over seventy-one hundred acres, with a circumference of fourteen miles. Of this the proprietors retained fifteen hundred and eight acres in lots, and were paid for five hundred and thirteen. We may as well say here, that the fund for improvement thus provided, though apparently liberal, never produced such results as were anticipated. Many of the Government lots were given to the Georgetown and Columbia Colleges, and others were sold at too early a day to bring large prices, so that previous to 1854, only about eight hundred thousand dollars were realised,—a small amount for the magnitude of the improvement called for by the plans. Some of the proprietors erred in the other extreme, and lost the sale of their lots by demanding too much, or by injudicious improvements. The family of Burns secured a fortune. Upon the whole, the terms of purchase seem to have been fair

for both sides, and Mr. Jefferson, in his reply to Washington's letter, declares the acquisition as "really noble."

XIII.

APPEARANCE OF SITE.

THE site for a city thus obtained was in many respects beautiful. From a point where the Potomac, at a distance of 295 miles from the ocean, and flowing from northwest to southeast, expands to the width of a mile, extended back an almost level plain, hemmed in by a series of gradually sloping hills, terminating with the heights of Georgetown; the plain being nearly four miles in length from east to west, and varying from a quarter of a mile to one mile and a half in breadth; bounded on the east by the Eastern Branch of the Potomac, where are now the Navy Yard and Congressional burying ground, and on the west by the Rock creek, which separates it from Georgetown. The small stream from the North, over which the railroad bridge now passes, on entering the city, emptied into a bay or inlet of the Potomac, about 1,000 feet wide, which jutted in from the west to within a quarter of a mile of the Capitol Hill, and nearly divided the plain, extending in some places quite up to

the line of Pennsylvania avenue, and forming a perfect marsh where the Centre Market now stands. A portion of this forms the basin of the Canal which disfigures the place, and concerning which a great blunder was made by the engineers in not giving a higher grade to the Avenue and other streets so as to make it an effectual mode of drainage. Not far from the head of this, and south of the Capitol Hill, a small stream took its rise in a large number of springs, and emptied into the river at a place now called Greenleaf's Point, formed by the intersection of the Eastern Branch with the Potomac, and was known as James' creek. It remains now very much as it appeared then; though there can be no doubt that it will ultimately come into use for drainage, when both that and the canal should either be covered over, or made to answer a more effectual purpose for sewerage by wash-out locks.

There is a stream above Georgetown which has always been called Goose creek; but from a certificate of a survey now preserved in the Mayor's office at Washington, dated 1663, it appears that the inlet from the Potomac was then known by the name of *Tiber*, and probably the stream from the north emptying into it bore the same name, so that Moore confounded streams, when he wrote the well-known line:

“And what was Goose Creek once, is Tiber now.”

By the same survey it appears that the land, comprising the Capitol Hill, was called Rome or Room—two names which seem to have foreshadowed the destiny of the place. Mr. Force, of Washington, suggests that they probably originated in the fact that the name of the owner of the estate was Pope, and, in selecting a name for his plantation, he fancied the title of “Pope of Rome.” The heights, all the way from Georgetown to the Capitol Hill, presented the finest positions for residences, and the streets could everywhere be made to descend in a gentle slope to the river, while upon the level ground near the river there was every apparent advantage for business streets. It is said that Washington’s attention had been called to the advantages which this place presented for a city as long previous as when he had been a youthful surveyor of the country round, and that he encamped with Braddock’s forces on the hill now occupied by the Observatory, which was long known as Camp Hill from this circumstance. His judgment was confirmed by the fact that two towns were afterward planned on the spot, and the first maps of the city represent it as laid out over the plans of Hamburgh and Carrollsville.

XIV.

CORNER STONE OF THE DISTRICT.

COMMISSIONERS had been appointed to carry out the objects of the act, and on the 15th day of April, 1791, the Hon. Daniel Carroll and Dr. David Stuart superintended the fixing of the first corner stone of the District of Columbia, at Jones' Point, near Alexandria, where it was laid with all the Masonic ceremonies usual at that time; and a quaint address, almost all in Scriptural language, delivered by the Rev. James Muir. It is saddening to read the last sentence, and think of what has happened since:—

“‘Amiable it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; it is more fragrant than the perfumes on Aaron's garment; it is more refreshing than the dews on Hermon's hill!’ May this stone long commemorate the goodness of God in those uncommon events which have given America a name among nations. Under this stone may jealousy and selfishness be forever buried. From this stone may a superstructure arise, whose glory, whose magnificence, whose stability, unequalled hitherto, shall aston-

ish the world, and invite even the savage of the wilderness to take shelter under its roof." *

XV.

HOW THE CITY WAS PLANNED.

THE first public communication on record, in relation to arrangements for laying out the city of Washington, is from the pen of Gen. Washington, dated on the 11th of March, 1791. In a subsequent letter of the 30th April, 1791, he called it the Federal city. The name which it now bears was adopted about four months afterward, probably without the knowledge of Washington, in a letter to Major L'Enfant, by the first commissioners, Messrs. Johnson, Stuart, and Carroll, which bears date Georgetown, September 9th, 1791, and informs the architect that they have agreed that the Federal district shall be called "The Territory of Columbia," and the Federal city, "The City of Washington," and directs him to entitle his map accordingly.

The Major L'Enfant here referred to was the architect employed to lay out the city,—a

* By the retrocession of Alexandria, this stone is no longer within the limits of the District. A square mass of masonry near the National Monument was the centre of the District.

Frenchman of talent, but apparently obstinate and unwilling to be advised by others: a not uncommon characteristic of architects. The French minister jocosely remarked that he was not only a child in name, but in education also, as, from the names he gave the streets, he appeared to know little else than A, B, C, and 1, 2, 3. It appears, however, by a letter to the commissioners, that they gave these names to the streets at the same time with that to the city. Mr. Jefferson took great interest in the plan, and, in a letter to Washington, speaks of having furnished L'Enfant with large and accurate maps of all the principal towns on the continent, adding that they were "none of them comparable to the old Babylon revived and exemplified in Philadelphia." An opinion in which we can hardly concur. A city laid out like a chess-board doubtless presents some great advantages, in equalizing the size of lots, and rendering it easy to find the streets. But there may be too much of a good thing. Certainly such a plan exhibits no great skill on the part of the architect, who, as a writer remarks, "might have directed the whole work without getting out of his bed." There is something wanting to relieve the monotony; and an occasional curve or obtuse angle might, it would seem, be introduced, so as to add to the beauty.

Had one or two great avenues been run obliquely, in Philadelphia, it would have facilitated communication without marring the general convenience.

At Washington the architect undertook to combine the two features, and went to another extreme, giving rather too much of each.

Taking the Capitol Hill for a centre, he laid down streets parallel thereto, and in due lines from east to west. These he distinguished by letters. Then another set of streets from north to south were made to intersect the lettered ones at right angles. These were distinguished by numbers. But numbers and letters were doubled. The street immediately north of the Capitol was called *A street North*; that immediately south, *A street South*. The first parallel street east of the Capitol is *First street East*, while on the west we have *First street West*.

Up to this time very little confusion has been created, because the principal population is north and west of the Capitol; so that, in common conversation, no regard is paid to the points of the compass. But, as the streets over by the Smithsonian, or in the direction of the Navy Yard, are filling up, it will become very desirable either to change the names, or to make the numbers run continuously from east to west, and the letters from north to south.

The streets south of the Capitol are now more generally distinguished with the addition of *Island*, that part of the town being separated by a canal.

Thus far the plan was like that of Philadelphia. But before laying down these streets, he had designated sites for the Capitol, President's house, Court house, and other edifices, and connected them with the most distant points by avenues, so as, in the language on the map, "to preserve through the whole a reciprocity of sight at the same time." These were also intended to pass over the most favorable ground for prospect and convenience. There are some sixteen of these avenues; and they are certainly a grand feature in a city of such magnificent distances. Thus, from the Eastern Branch on the southeast, Pennsylvania avenue passes over low ground in a northwesterly direction, by the Capitol and President's house, to Georgetown. Massachusetts avenue connects the Eastern Branch with the extreme northwestern part of the city, passing over high ground. Virginia connects the Navy Yard with the southwestern section at Monument Place. Maryland is from the Capitol to the Potomac bridge. From the extreme northeast a view might be had of the President's house (but for the Treasury obstruction) through New York avenue, and so on.

The Capitol fronts exactly east and west, not upon any avenue, as most persons suppose. Its grounds were planned to extend to the Potomac. Also those of the President's house, which fronts exactly north and south; but has now a circular street on the south, which is not on the plan, and ought to be closed.

Of course these avenues, intersecting the rectangular streets at acute angles, would make everywhere awkward points and spaces. In order to obviate this in some degree, the rectangular streets had to be placed at unequal distances from each other, and, sometimes were ziz-zag, as may be seen by reference to the map. Thus, a person walking through H street, will find when he comes to New York avenue at Thirteenth street, that the continuous line of the street disappears—and he must go north, around the church, before he strikes it again, and when he reaches Pennsylvania avenue, he loses it once more, and must go south, to strike the former line of the street. Again, Fourth and Fifth streets, on either side of the City Hall, have not been carried down to the Avenue, and, between the two, a street connecting the City Hall with the Arsenal, has been christened with the euphonious name of "*Four and a half street.*"

The eminence on which the City Hall

stands, was one of the most beautiful slopes in the place, and ought to have been entirely reserved for some public purpose, the grounds extending to the Avenue. It is now cut up by two short avenues and three streets, and the space between Louisiana avenue, C, Sixth and Seventh streets, is too contracted for buildings of suitable size. These defects in the plan might have been avoided to some extent by reducing the number of streets, of which there are more than are needed, while many of the squares are too small to allow of gardens or pleasant courtyards, so desirable in that climate. According to Mr. Watterson, there are one hundred and ninety-five miles of streets, and sixty-five miles of avenues, and the area appropriated to thoroughfares altogether, amounts to 3,604 acres, while the building lots, including Government reservations, only comprise 3,529 acres. The building lots are apparently considered of secondary importance. The squares are made for the streets rather than the streets for the squares. When the reader is informed that many of the avenues and streets are one hundred and thirty to one hundred and sixty feet wide, and none of a less width than ninety feet, he can readily see how the advantages which the site presented may have been abused; and he can certainly perceive what a bur-

den it would be, to even a large commercial population, to construct such streets of a proper grade, and keep them paved and clean. The Government itself has found it no trifling undertaking to attend to Pennsylvania avenue, which is the only one which has, to any considerable extent, been taken under its charge. One or two such enormous thoroughfares might have been well enough, but so great a number was entirely needless. They are too wide for convenience in crossing, and from the difficulty of shading them, intolerably hot in warm weather. To make matters worse, a regulation was made by the commissioners, prohibiting the inclosure of more than five feet of the street for a courtyard, so that few of the houses have that pleasant relief to the eye which is to be seen in many other cities. One third at least, of every street, might be inclosed in this way, without diminishing the accommodation of carriage way or sidewalk to an inconvenient degree.

Another noteworthy circumstance is that not a single reservation for public purposes was made on the heights north of the city, where all the best residences are latterly being constructed, and where the Government has had to buy property for an army asylum. That, as well as the Lunatic Asylum, is without the city limits,

and not included, therefore, in the proprietor's deed, but many of the most eligible positions, even for such purposes, are within the ground covered by the plan. It seems singular, too, that no provision was made for a central site on which to construct a penitentiary and jail.

That a field for military evolutions should not have been reserved by a Parisian architect, is still more remarkable. Doubtless it was fondly believed that no such ground would be needed. The place where Gen. McClellan reviewed his fifty thousand soldiers, over by the Almshouse, might be secured for that object now at a very trifling cost, as it will not be wanted for private purposes for many years to come.

XVI.

MAGNIFICENT INTENTIONS.

IN 1790, the President submitted to Congress the report of the Commissioners, containing the plan. The plan was engraved, and the plate having been found a few years ago, a number of copies were printed, and it is the best indication of the views entertained with regard to sites for public edifices. The map was slightly altered before adoption, and the only sites which were determined by law, were

those for the Capitol and President's House, which were the only permanent buildings then ordered. The following were some of the magnificent intentions :

1. "An equestrian figure of George Washington, a monument voted in 1783, by the late Continental Congress."

It was not until 1852 that Congress made an appropriation for this statue; but, in the meantime, the site thus designated for it, in Washington's lifetime, has been given by Congress for the Washington National Monument.

2. "An historic column, also intended for a mile or itinerary column, from whose station (at a mile from the Federal House) all distances and places through the continent are to be calculated."

The site designated for this was at the open space east of the Capitol, at the intersection of East Capitol street, North Carolina, Massachusetts, Kentucky and Tennessee avenues, near where the great reviews lately took place.

3. "A naval itinerary column, proposed to be erected to celebrate the first rise of a navy, and to stand a ready monument to perpetuate its progress and achievements."

4. "Fifteen squares were to be divided among the several States in the Union for each of them to improve; the centres of these squares

designed for statues, columns, obelisks, &c., such as the different States may choose to erect."

5. "A church intended for national purposes, such as public prayer, thanksgiving, funeral orations, &c., and assigned to the special use of no particular sect or denomination, but equally open to all. It will likewise be a proper shelter for such monuments as were voted by the late Continental Congress, for those heroes who fell in the cause of liberty, and for such others as may hereafter be decreed by the voice of a grateful nation."

The square now occupied by the Patent Office was intended for this church, which was to be officiated in by the chaplains of Congress.

6. "Five grand fountains.

These were to be at reservation 17, in front of the Duddington Mansion, New Jersey avenue, intersection of F street North and Maryland avenue toward the Baltimore road, H street North and New York avenue, in front of where the Presbyterian church now stands; N street North and Pennsylvania avenue; and Market Space.

7. "A grand avenue, four hundred feet in breadth, and about a mile in length, bordered with gardens, ending in a slope from the houses on each side. This avenue leads to the monument of Washington, and connects the Congress garden with the President's park."

This is the ground extending from the Capitol to the Monument on the Potomac, and known as the Mall. Nothing was ever done toward improving it, until 1851-'2, when, Congress having made an appropriation toward that object, President Fillmore engaged the services of the late A. J. Downing, landscape gardener, who laid out the grounds upon a plan which was a great improvement upon the original design. It consists of serpentine walks and drives, with arrangements for presenting all the forest trees of the country, as well as the accommodation of a botanic garden, should Congress authorize one. That portion in front of the Smithsonian Institute, and immediately south of the President's House, has been planted; the rest is unfinished, and no part has as yet been suitably inclosed. The area of this ground, between Seventh and Fifteenth streets, and exclusive of the space occupied by Twelfth and Fourteenth streets is something over . . . 98 acres.

The Monument Square west of Fifteenth street embraces over . . . 30 “

We have not the dimensions of the ground from Capitol Square to Seventh street, but it must be over 30 “

Making the whole area about 158 acres

—quite enough to furnish opportunity for a great variety of gardening and shrubbery, though the ground is too level to produce any of the picturesque effects which we behold in the splendid parks at New York and Baltimore. The Arlington heights, when connected by something more substantial and elegant than the present ricketty old bridge, may possibly be made to vie with those we have just named. But little more would be needed than a good road winding around the different forts.

Some years since, Congress very unwisely reduced the size of these public grounds by selling out, for private purposes, portions of them near the Capitol, reducing the Mall to an awkward point, on either side of the Canal, opposite the place where the conservatories are erected.

The following also relates to the improvement of the Mall.

8. "The water of Tiber creek to be conveyed to the high ground, where the Congress House stands, and, after watering that part of the city, its overplus will fall from under the base of the edifice, and, in a cascade of twenty feet in height, and fifty in breadth, into the reservoir below, thence to run, in three falls, through the gardens in the grand canal."

Since the Potomac water has been introduced, there is nothing to prevent this design

being carried into execution. The feature of connecting the Capitol and President's House by a garden, is calculated to soften the distance between these two edifices somewhat, as in the case of the Chamber of Deputies and Tuileries at Paris, which, no doubt, L'Enfant had in his eye when he made the plan. Until this is carried out, the two sections of the city on different sides of the Canal will never look well, for want of any appropriate connection, and not only this, but the Capitol grounds (which by this garden would to all intents extend to the Potomac), must present a half finished appearance. Perhaps, by suitable locks, and a constant flow of water as above, the present Canal may be made to subserve some purpose of ornament. At present it is anything but "grand."

Mr. Trollope, in his book about America, says that this ground is a marsh. It is higher ground than the Avenue, and there is not the slightest foundation for such a statement.

XVII.

POSITIONS OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

THAT the Commissioners intended that some public buildings should be placed on the Mall, is apparent from the design on their plan, upon the south side. between Tenth and Twelfth

streets. The opposite side, along South B street, is marked in such a way as to indicate that there was to be either a high bank, or a range of houses on that side,—possibly for the use of the States, as in No. 4 of the above schemes; more probably residences for the heads of departments and foreign ministers. It is well known that a portion of the President's Square was, at one time, set apart for the Portuguese minister. In a report of the Commissioners to Congress, made March 23, 1802, we find the following statement :

“The measure of granting sites for the residences of foreign ministers was warmly recommended by President Washington, and approved by President Adams, before any steps were taken by the Commissioners to carry it into effect. President Washington, himself, pointed out the spot granted to the Queen of Portugal, as a proper site for the residence of a foreign minister, and Mr. Adams delivered letters from the Commissioners, making the offer to all the ministers of friendly powers near the United States, and endorsed his approbation of the deed to the Queen of Portugal, after it was executed. But the Attorney General was of opinion that Congress, alone, was competent to make the grant, which arrested all further proceedings.”

The executive offices were, on this plan, to be placed immediately south of the President's House, on either side of the garden, extending from that building to the Potomac, leaving the White House visible from every quarter, and giving a finish to its appearance from the south.

The brick buildings for the War, Navy, State, and Treasury, were erected immediately east and west of the President's, probably because at that time the other ground was too low and required too costly a foundation. The Treasury was destroyed by fire during Gen. Jackson's administration. Congress appropriated for a new edifice on such site as the President should designate, and the story is that Old Hickory walked out one day with Mills the architect, and planted his cane where the cornerstone of the present costly edifice was afterward laid.

Little did either of them trouble their heads about the original designs, or the fact that they were giving the building a cramped position on a narrow street, and hiding the Executive mansion from view through F street. The Committee on Public Buildings discovered the blunder at the next session, and, through Mr. Lincoln of Massachusetts, made a strenuous effort to stop the work, and cause its erection in a more suitable position; but it had then progressed too

far, and the resolution was lost. Every one who walks the avenues must have observed the pleasing effects of the glimpse of some great structure obtained on looking up certain streets. At Four and a half street and Louisiana avenue it is the City Hall—also, at the last avenue, the Monument; at Eighth street the Patent Office; and at Tenth the Smithsonian. Had the design of the Commissioners been followed, this would have been more often the case, and the beauties of the plan been made apparent.

The distance between the Legislative and Executive Departments has been the subject of much comment.* Mr. Adams wanted the Departments around the Capitol, but Washington shortly before his death wrote as follows:

“The principles which operated for fixing the site for the two principal buildings, were understood and found necessary, at the time, to obtain the primary objects—i. e., the ground and means for either purpose; but it is always easy, from an ignorant or partial view of a

* It is a mile and a half from the northern end of the Navy Yard bridge to the Capitol, a mile and a half from the Capitol to the Executive mansion, and a mile and a half from the Executive mansion to the corner of Bridge and High streets, Georgetown. Pedestrians who wish to ascertain what ‘time’ they can make, will find it exactly one mile from the Capitol to Eleventh street, two miles to Twentieth street, and three miles to the corner of Bridge and High streets, Georgetown.

measure, to distort and place it in an unfavorable attitude. Where or how the houses for the President and the public offices may be fixed, is to me, as an individual, a matter of moonshine. But the reverse of the President's motive for placing the latter near the Capitol, was my motive for fixing them by the former. The daily intercourse which the Secretaries of the departments must have with the President, would render a distant situation extremely inconvenient to them, and not much less so would one be close to the Capitol; for it was the universal complaint of them all, that while the legislature was in session, they could do little or no business, so much were they interrupted by the individual visits of members (in office hours), and by calls for papers. Many of them have disclosed to me that they have been obliged often to go home and deny themselves, in order to transact the current business."

Others of the Executive offices have been scattered about the city almost by accident.

The Patent Office Square was, as we have seen, reserved for a church; but is appropriately enough occupied by that imposing structure; as the operations of that office have more connection with the Judiciary Square than with the other Executive Departments, although it is a bureau of the Interior Department, which has

lately, for want of other quarters, taken refuge under the roof of its subordinate. The General Post Office owes its position to the circumstance that an unfinished brick hotel on that spot was first rented and then bought by the Government for the purpose.

The square immediately west ought now to be purchased. A building similar to the Post Office might be erected there for some other Department. The effect would be to give more of harmony to the group of buildings. Whenever a condemnation of property for the enlargement of the Capitol Square is decided upon, it is to be hoped this square will also be included in the estimate.

Experience has proved the truth of the positions taken by Washington, in a letter to the Commissioners, dated December 26, 1796. where he remarks:—"I have never yet met with a single instance where it has been proposed to depart from the published plan of the city, that an inconvenience or dispute of some sort has not sooner or later occurred, for which reason I am persuaded that there should be no departure from it, but in case of necessity or very obvious utility."

There are many articles in the newspapers of the day in relation to the proceedings for laying out a National City. In the *Herald* of

Jan. 4, 1795, published at Philadelphia, is a long article, setting forth the general plan, and more particularly the designs for the Mall or garden from the Capitol to the President's House. The following is an extract :

“To found a city, for the purpose of making, it the depository of the acts of the Union, and the sanctuary of the laws which must, one day, rule all North America, is a grand and comprehensive idea, which has already become, with propriety, the object of public respect. The city of Washington, considered under such important points of view, could not be calculated on a small scale ; its extent, the disposition of its avenues and public squares, should all correspond with the magnitude of the objects for which it was intended—and we need only cast our eyes upon the situation and plan of the city, to recognize in them the comprehensive genius of the President, to whom the direction of the business has been committed by Congress.”

XVIII.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE CAPITOL, 1793.

On the 18th of September, 1793, the south-east corner stone of the Capitol was laid by Washington, and a minute account of the cere-

monial appears in the *Maryland Gazette*, published at Annapolis, Sept. 26th, 1793. It is mostly devoted to the Masonic ceremonial so usual at that day, in which "Lodge 22, of Virginia, that congregation so graceful to the craft," figures largely with "Grand Master P. J. Geo. Washington, Worshipful Master" of said Lodge. We are also told that there appeared "on the southern banks of the grand river Potomac, one of the finest companies of artillery that hath been lately seen, parading to receive the President of the U. S." The Commissioners delivered to the President, who deposited in the stone, a silver plate, with the following inscription:

"This southeast corner stone of the Capitol of the United States of America in the city of Washington was laid on the 18th day of September, 1792, in the thirteenth year of American Independence, in the first year of the second term of the Presidency of George Washington, whose virtues in the civil administration of his country have been so conspicuous and beneficial, as his military valor and prudence have been useful in establishing her liberties, and in the year of Masonry, 5793, by the President of the United States, in concert with the Grand Lodge of Maryland, several lodges under its jurisdiction, and Lodge No. 22 from Alexandria, Virginia.

“ Thomas Johnson, David Stewart, and Daniel Carroll, Commissioners ; Joseph Clark, R. W. G. M. P. T. ; James Hoban and Stephen Hallate, Architects ; Collin Williamson, M. Mason.”

A Mr. Clotworthy Stevenson made an address, and the account concludes as follows :

“ The whole company retired to an extensive booth, where an ox of 500 lbs. weight was barbecued, of which the company generally partook, with every abundance of other recreation. The festival concluded with fifteen successive volleys from the artillery, whose military discipline and manœuvres merit every commendation.

“ Before dark the whole company departed with joyful hopes of the production of their labor.”

It may be interesting, in this connection, to glance at the proceeding which took place near this spot fifty-eight years afterward, when the following was deposited in another stone, in the handwriting of Daniel Webster.

“ On the morning of the first day of the seventy-sixth year of the Independence of the United States of America, in the City of Washington, being the fourth day of July, eighteen hundred and fifty-one, this stone, designed as the corner stone of the extension of the Capitol, according to a plan approved by the Presi-

dent, in pursuance of an act of Congress, was laid by

MILLARD FILLMORE,
President of the United States,

assisted by the Grand Master of the Masonic Lodges, in the presence of many members of Congress, of officers of the Executive and Judiciary Department, National, State, and District, of officers of the Army and Navy, the Corporate authorities of this and neighboring cities, many associations, civil and military and masonic, officers of the Smithsonian Institution and National Institute, professors of colleges and teachers of schools of the District, with their students and pupils, and a vast concourse of people from places near and remote, including a few surviving gentlemen who witnessed the laying of the corner stone of the Capitol by President Washington, on the eighteenth day of September, seventeen hundred and ninety-three.

“If therefore, it shall be hereafter the will of God that this structure shall fall from its base, that its foundation be upturned, and this deposit brought to the eyes of men, be it then known, that, on this day the Union of the United States of America stands firm, that their Constitution still exists unimpaired, and with all its original usefulness and glory ; growing every day stronger

and stronger in the affection of the great body of the American people, and attracting more and more the admiration of the world. And all here assembled, whether belonging to public life or to private life, with hearts devoutly thankful to Almighty God for the preservation of the liberty and happiness of the country, unite in sincere and fervent prayers that this deposit, and the walls and arches, the domes and towers, the columns and entablatures now to be erected over it, may endure forever.

“GOD SAVE THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

“DANIEL WEBSTER,

“Secretary of State of the United States.”

At the moment when this corner stone was laid there were men plotting that rebellion which now threatens the Union!

In the speech made by Mr. Webster on the occasion, occurs the following beautiful allusion to the first corner stone.

“Fellow citizens, what contemplations are awakened in our minds as we assemble here to reënact a scene like that performed by WASHINGTON! Methinks I see his venerable form now before me, as presented in the glorious statue by Houdon, now in the Capitol of Virginia. He is dignified and grave; but concern and anxiety seem to soften the lineaments of his

countenance. The Government over which he presides is yet in the crisis of experiment. Not free from troubles at home, he sees the world in commotion and in arms all around him. He sees that imposing foreign powers are half disposed to try the strength of the recently-established American Government. We perceive that mighty thoughts, mingled with fears as well as with hopes, are struggling with him. He heads a short procession over these then naked fields ; he crosses yonder stream on a fallen tree ; he ascends to the top of this eminence, whose original oaks of the forest stand as thick around him as if the spot had been devoted to Druidical worship, and here he performs the appointed duty of the day."

The oaks, here referred to, either by some omission in the contract with the owners, or more probably from the difficulty of preserving forest trees after the removal of the undergrowth, have all disappeared except one or two stumps.

Washington's correspondence is full of allusions to the embarrassments encountered in obtaining sufficient means to render the public buildings tenantable by the time specified (1800).

Many of his letters relate to the progress of the Capitol, to the prompt completion of which

he seems to have looked as an event almost ominous of the permanent establishment of the Government at this place. Virginia had made a donation of \$120,000, and Maryland one of \$72,000—these were now exhausted. After various efforts to raise money by the forced sales of public lots, and after abortive attempts to borrow money at home and abroad, on the credit of these lots; amidst general embarrassment, whilst Congress withheld any aid whatever, the urgency appeared to the President so great, as to induce him to make a personal application to the State of Maryland for a loan, which was successful, and the deplorable credit of the Government, at that time, is exhibited in the fact that the State called upon the private credit of the Commissioners, as an additional guarantee for the repayment of the amount (\$100,000), to which Washington alludes as follows:

“The necessity of the case justified the obtaining it almost on any terms; and the zeal of the Commissioners in making themselves liable for the amount, as it could not be had without, cannot fail of approbation. At the same time, I must confess that the request has a very singular appearance, and will not, I should suppose, be very grateful to the feelings of Congress.”

It would seem that another difficulty in the progress of the public buildings proceeded from the jealousies and bickerings of those whose interest it was "to appreciate the credit of the city, and to aid the Commissioners." This appears from a letter of Washington to the Commissioners, dated Feb. 15, 1797, in which he urges that all available means should be concentrated on the Capitol.

He did not live to see the city occupied, having died in December, 1799.

XIX.

HOW THE PLACE LOOKED IN 1800.

WHEN the plans of the new city were completed, they were sent to all parts of the country and to Europe (an act having been passed to enable aliens to hold land there), and the bidding was very high for the best lots. Any one who stands on the dome of the Capitol, will observe the wide space which intervenes between the Navy Yard and the Arsenal. It was supposed by many that this part would be built up first, the deep water being here, and immense sums were thrown away in city lots; the course which things took afterward, having ruined the proprietors. The change

was chiefly brought about by the circumstance that, when Congress was first established there, the members boarded in Georgetown, for the want of sufficient accommodations elsewhere ; and, also, from the fact that the public offices were in that direction, which caused the Pennsylvania avenue to be first improved.

Mr. Law, a brother of Lord Ellenborough, and a Mr. Greenleaf, after whom the Arsenal Point was called, were among the sufferers. Some fine blocks of buildings were erected near the Arsenal, which are still there, and compare favorably with many modern first-class dwellings. Long rows of brick houses were commenced at other points between the Arsenal and the Navy Yard, and for many years the stacks of chimneys remained standing as monuments of the frailty of human judgment.

In June, 1800, the executive offices were removed thither. On the 4th of July Mr. Oliver Wolcott, then Secretary of the Treasury, gives his impressions in a letter to his wife, of which the following is an extract :

“I write this letter in the building erected for the use of the Treasury Department, in the city of Washington ; and, this being a day of leisure, I shall be able to give you some idea of this famous place, the permanent seat of American Government.

“The city of Washington, *or at least some part of it*, is about forty miles from Baltimore. The situation is pleasant, and indeed beautiful; the prospects are equal to those which are called *good* on Connecticut river; the soil is here called good, but I call it bad. It is an exceedingly stiff reddish clay, which becomes dust in dry, and mortar in rainy weather. * * *

“It [the President’s House] was built to be looked at by visitors and strangers, and will render its occupant an object of ridicule with some, and of pity with others. It must be cold and damp in winter, and cannot be kept in tolerable order without a regiment of servants.

“The Capitol is situated on an eminence, which I should suppose was near the centre of the *immense country here called the city*. It is a mile and a half from the President’s house, and three miles on a straight line from Georgetown. There is one good tavern about forty rods from the Capitol, and several other houses are built and erecting; but I do not perceive how the members of Congress can possibly secure lodgings, unless they will consent to live like scholars in a college, or monks in a monastery, crowded ten or twenty in one house, and utterly secluded from society. The only resource for such as wish to live comfortably will, I think, be found in Georgetown, three miles distant,

over as bad a road in winter as the clay grounds near Hartford.

“I have made every exertion to secure good lodgings near the office, but shall be compelled to take them at the distance of more than half a mile. There are, in fact, but *few houses at any one place, and most of them small miserable huts*, which present an awful contrast to the public buildings. *The people are poor, and, as far as I can judge, they live like fishes, by eating each other.* All the ground for several miles around the city, being, in the opinion of the people, too valuable to be cultivated, remains unfenced. There are but few inclosures, even for gardens, and those are in bad order. You may look in almost any direction, over an extent of ground nearly as large as the city of New York, without seeing a fence or any object except brick kilns and temporary huts for laborers. * * * Greenleaf’s Point presents the appearance of a considerable town which had been destroyed by some unusual calamity. There are [at Greenleaf’s Point] fifty or sixty spacious houses, five or six of which are occupied by negroes and vagrants, and a few more by decent-looking people; but there are no fences, gardens, nor the least appearance of business. This place is about a mile and a half south of the Capitol.”

President Adams (the elder) arrived with his

family in November of the same year. On the 25th of that month Mrs. Adams wrote to her daughter, Mrs. Smith, as follows:

“I arrived here on Sunday last, and without meeting with any accident worth noticing, except losing ourselves when we left Baltimore, and going eight or nine miles on the Frederick road, by which means we were obliged to go the other eight through the woods, where we wandered two hours without finding a guide or the path. Fortunately, a straggling black came up with us, and we engaged him as a guide to extricate us out of our difficulty; but woods are all you see from Baltimore until you reach *the city*, which is only so in name. Here and there is a small cot, without a glass window, interspersed amongst the forests, through which you travel miles without seeing any human being. In the city there are buildings enough, if they were compact and finished, to accommodate Congress and those attached to it; but as they are, and scattered as they are, I see no great comfort for them. * * *

“If the twelve years in which this place has been considered as the future Seat of Government had been improved, as they would have been in New England, very many of the present inconveniences would have been removed. It is a beautiful spot, capable of any improvement,

and the more I view it the more I am delighted with it.”

The appearance of the city at this time is thus described by the Hon. John Cotton Smith, of Connecticut. He was a distinguished member of Congress, of the Federal school of politics:

“Our approach to the city was accompanied with sensations not easily described. One wing of the Capitol only had been erected, which, with the President’s House, a mile distant from it, both constructed with white sandstone, were shining objects in dismal contrast with the scene around them. Instead of recognizing the avenues and streets portrayed on the plan of the city, not one was visible, unless we except a road, with two buildings on each side of it, called the New Jersey avenue. The Pennsylvania, leading, as laid down on paper, from the Capitol to the Presidential mansion, was then nearly the whole distance a deep morass covered with alder bushes, which were cut through the width of the intended avenue during the then ensuing winter.

“Between the President’s House and Georgetown a block of houses had been erected, which then bore, and may still bear the name of the *Six Buildings*. There were also two other blocks, consisting of two or three dwelling houses, in different directions, and now and

then an insulated wooden habitation; the intervening spaces, and, indeed, the surface of the city generally, being covered with *shrub oak bushes* on the higher grounds, and on the marshy soil either trees or some sort of shrubbery. Nor was the desolate aspect of the place a little augmented by a number of unfinished edifices at *Greenleaf's Point*, and on an eminence a short distance from it, commenced by an individual whose name they bore, but the state of whose funds compelled him to abandon them, not only unfinished, but in a ruinous condition. There appeared to be but two really comfortable habitations in all respects within the bounds of the city, one of which belonged to Daniel Carroll, Esq., and the other to Notley Young, who were the former proprietors of a large proportion of the land appropriated to the city, but who reserved for their own accommodation ground sufficient for gardens and other useful appurtenances. The roads in every direction were muddy and unimproved. A sidewalk was attempted in one instance by a covering formed of the chips of the stones which had been hewed for the Capitol. It extended but a little way, and was of little value; for in dry weather the sharp fragments cut our shoes, and in wet weather covered them with white mortar. In short, it was a "new settlement." The

houses, with two or three exceptions, had been very recently erected, and the operation greatly hurried in view of the approaching transfer of the National Government. A laudable desire was manifested by what few citizens and residents there were to render our condition as pleasant as circumstances would permit. One of the blocks of buildings already mentioned was situated on the east side of what was intended for the Capitol Square, and, being chiefly occupied by an extensive and well-kept hotel, accommodated a goodly number of the members. Our little party took lodgings with a Mr. Peacock, in one of the houses on the New Jersey avenue, with the addition of Senators Tracy, of Connecticut, and Chipman and Paine, of Vermont; and Representatives Thomas, of Maryland, and Dana, Edmond and Griswold, of Connecticut. Speaker Sedgwick was allowed a room to himself; the rest of us in pairs. To my excellent friend Davenport and myself was allowed a spacious and decently-furnished apartment, with separate beds, on the lower floor. Our diet was various, but always substantial, and we were attended by active and faithful servants. A large proportion of Southern members took lodgings at Georgetown, which, though of a superior order, were three miles distant from the Capitol, and of course rendered

the daily employment of hackney coaches indispensable.

“Notwithstanding the unfavorable aspect which Washington presented on our arrival, I cannot sufficiently express my admiration of its local position. From the Capitol you have a distinct view of its fine undulating surface, situated at the confluence of the Potomac and its Eastern Branch, the wide expanse of that majestic river to the bend at Mount Vernon, the cities of Alexandria and Georgetown, and the cultivated fields and blue hills of Maryland and Virginia on either side of the river, the whole constituting a prospect of surpassing beauty and grandeur.

“The city has also the inestimable advantage of delightful water, in many instances flowing from copious springs, and always attainable by digging to a moderate depth; to which may be added the singular fact that such is the due admixture of loam and clay in the soil of a great portion of the city, that a house may be built of brick made of the earth dug from the cellar; hence it was not unusual to see the remains of a brick kiln near the newly-erected dwelling house or other edifice. In short, when we consider not only these advantages, but what in a national point of view, is of superior importance, the location on a fine, navigable river, accessi-

ble to the whole maritime frontier of the United States, and yet easily rendered defensible against foreign invasion; and that, by the facilities of internal navigation and railways, it may be approached by the population of the Western States, and indeed of the whole nation, with less inconvenience than any other conceivable situation, we must acknowledge that its selection by Washington as the permanent Seat of the Federal Government, affords a striking exhibition of the discernment, wisdom, and forecast, which characterized that illustrious man. Under this impression, whenever, during the six years of my connection with Congress, the question of removing the Seat of Government to some other place was agitated—and the proposition was frequently made—I stood almost alone as a Northern man in giving my vote in the negative.”

XX.

WHAT A FOREIGN MINISTER SAID OF THE PLACE IN JEFFERSON'S TIME.

Sir Augustus Foster, who was Secretary of Legation at Washington to the British Minister, Mr. Merry, during the years 1804-'5 and '6, has given some rather entertaining accounts of the state of society here, in the time of Mr. Jefferson.

They are the more interesting, as showing the impression made upon an intelligent foreigner, having access to the best circles. The following extracts are from the notice of his book (which was not published) contained in the Quarterly Review, in 1841 :

“The Spanish Envoy, De Caso Yrujo, told Sir Augustus, it was difficult to produce a decent dinner in the new capital, without sending fifty or sixty miles for its materials. Things had mended somewhat before the writer’s arrival, but still he found enough to surprise and bewilder him in the desolate vastness and mean accommodations of the unshaped metropolis. He attributes the selection of the locality, partly at least, to General Washington’s partiality for the neighborhood of his own paternal property ; but seems to think the inconveniences attending such a choice would have, ere long, produced a removal to some already large and well-supplied city near the Atlantic, but for certain considerations of a personal and not very dignified nature, which were of paramount importance with Mr. Jefferson.”

CONGRESS IN 1804.

In the following we have a hit at Congress, which does not accord with the received notion of the dignity and gentlemanly breeding of

those who first attained that position in our country :

“The richer and more respectable members of Congress had, for the most part, always inclined to vote for returning to Philadelphia, or selecting some other town of practical importance, but every such proposal had been distasteful to the majority, it being in a great measure composed of rough and unfashioned persons, to whom it is of consequence to be in a place where they could be attended to more than in a large city. This majority had usually found support in the Government, so long composed of Virginians, who naturally preferred Washington to any remoter situation ; but the removal could hardly, he apprehends, have been avoided, but for the determined personal opposition of Jefferson. This President alleged as his reason the danger of throwing open again a question so difficult and delicate as that of the choice of the Seat of Government.”

CITIZENS.

Of private citizens, Sir Augustus says : “Very few private gentlemen have houses in Washington. I only recollect three : Mr. Brent, Mr. Tayloe, and Mr. Carroll.” He enumerates, however, several country seats within an easy

distance, where there was abundant and even elegant hospitality; particularly those of Mr. Key, an eminent lawyer, originally an officer in the English service; Mr. Calvert, Mr. Ogle, and Mr. Lewis.

“There were a great number of rich proprietors in the State of Maryland. In the district nearest the City of Washington alone, of which Montgomery county forms a part, I was assured that there were five hundred persons possessing estates which returned them an income of £1,000. Mr. Lloyd, a member of Congress, on the Eastern Branch, possessed a net revenue of between £6,000 and £7,000, with which he had only to buy clothes for himself and family, wines, equipage, furniture and other luxuries. Mr. Ringold possessed, near Hagerstown, a property yielding him an income of 12,000 dollars a year; and he rented his lands to tenants (whom he was at liberty to change, if he pleased, every year) for five dollars per acre, though he was to stand the expense of all repairs. Mr. Ringold kept but 600 acres in his own hands for stock. Mr. Tayloe, also, whose whole income exceeded £15,000 per annum, had a great portion of it in Maryland, chiefly at Nanjemoy, where he held 3,000 acres, which his father bought for £500!!! His property, too, must by this time be very considerably augmented,

for he was said to lay out about 33,000 dollars every year in new purchases. He possessed 500 slaves, built brigs and schooners, worked iron mines, converted the iron into ploughshares, —and all this was done by the hands of his own subjects. He had a splendid house at Mount Airy, with a property round it of 8,000 acres, and a house at the Federal City; and he told me that he raised about twelve bushels to the acre of the best land. Mr. Carrol, of Annapolis, grandfather of Lady Wellesley, the Duchess of Leeds, and Lady Stafford, was said to be still more wealthy, having, besides great accumulation in the funds, 15,000 acres of the best land in Frederic county, and several other estates.”

Since Sir Augustus wrote we need not say how all this has changed. The division of property among children, and the absence of all habits of thrift, has in many instances transferred the estates to strangers; but the fine old mansion houses generally remain, and attest the hospitality and elegance of the times to which our author has reference.

THE LADIES AND PEARL-POWDER.

The following will interest the ladies; “Most of the members of Congress, it is true, keep to their lodgings, but still there are a sufficient

number of them who are sociable, or whose families come to the city for a season, and there is no want of handsome ladies for the balls especially at George Town; indeed, I never saw prettier girls anywhere. As there are but few of them, however, in proportion to the great number of men who frequent the places of amusement in the Federal City, it is one of the most marrying places of the whole continent—a truth which was beginning to be found out, and became, by and by, the cause of vast numbers flocking thither all round from the four points of the compass. Maugre the march of intellect so much vaunted in the present century, the literary education of these ladies is far from being worthy of the age of knowledge, and conversation is apt to flag, though a seat by the ladies is always much coveted. Dancing and music served to eke out the time, but one got to be heartily sick of hearing the same song everywhere, even when it was ‘Just like love is yonder rose.’ No matter how this was sung; the words alone were the men traps; the belle of the evening was declared to be just like both—and people looked round as if the listener was expected to become on the instant very tender and to propose—and sometimes such a result does in reality take place, and both parties, when betrothed, use a great deal of billing and

cooing ; eat out of the same plate, drink out of the same glass, and show off their love to the whole company. Between these young ladies, who are generally not only good looking but good tempered, and, if not well informed, capable of becoming so, and the ladies of a certain time of life, or rather of the *seconda gioventu*, there is usually a wide gap in society, young married women being but seldom seen in the world ; as they approach, however, to the middle age, they are apt to become romantic ; those in particular who live in the country, and have read novels, fancying all manner of heroic things, and returning to the capital determined to have an adventure before they again retire, or on doing some wondrous act which shall make them be talked about in after times. I, myself, in vain reasoned with a very beautiful lady to try to persuade her not to cut off a head of hair, one of the finest I ever saw, of an auburn color, which she used to take the greatest pains to curl and keep in order, and had been evidently proud of ; but it was all useless ; she found out one day that it was a vanity, and vanity was a sin, and off she cut it and put it into the hands of her astonished and despairing husband. Others I have known to contract an aversion to water, and as a substitute, cover their faces and bosoms with hair powder, in order to render the skin

pure and delicate. This was peculiarly the case with some Virginian damsels who came to the balls at Washington, and who, in consequence, were hardly less intolerable than negroes.

There were but few cases, however, of this, I must confess; though, as regards the use of the powder, they were not so uncommon; and, at my balls, I thought it advisable to put on the tables of the toilette room not only rouge, but hair powder, as well as blue powder, which had some customers.

MUD.

In going to assemblies, one had sometimes to drive three or four miles within the city bounds, and very often at the great risk of an overturn, or of being what is termed 'stalled,' or stuck in the mud, when one can neither go backwards nor forwards, and either loses one's shoes or one's patience. . . . Cards were a great resource of an evening, and gaming was all the fashion, at brag especially, for the men who frequented society were chiefly from Virginia or the Western States, and were very fond of this, the most gambling of all games, as being one of countenance as well as of cards. Loo was the innocent diversion of the ladies, who, when they were loosed, pronounced the word in a very mincing manner."

RELIGION.

He does not seem to have been impressed with the devotional habits:

“Church service can certainly never be called an amusement; but, from the variety of persons who were allowed to preach in the House of Representatives, there doubtless was some alloy of curiosity in the motives which led one to go there. Though the regular chaplain was a Presbyterian, sometimes a Methodist, a minister of the Church of England, or a Quaker, and sometimes even a woman, took the Speaker's chair, and I do not think there was much devotion among the majority. The New Englanders, generally speaking, are very religious; but though there are many exceptions, I cannot say so much for the Marylanders, and still less for the Virginians.”

NOT SO BAD A PLACE AFTER ALL.

But, dull as he found the place on his first arrival, he speaks more favorably of it after he had visited other parts of the Union. He then says: “in spite of its inconveniences and desolate aspect, it was, I think, the most agreeable town to reside in for any length of time. The opportunity of collecting information from Senators and Representatives from all parts of the

country—the hospitality of the heads of the Government—and the *corps diplomatique* of itself—supplied resources such as could nowhere else be looked for.”

XXI.

PROGRESS AND PRESENT POSITION.

SOCIETY.

SINCE Sir Augustus wrote his gossip in 1804-'8, society in Washington has undergone many changes, not to speak of those caused by the war; but the anticipations of the founders in this respect have been realized. It is certainly a peculiar city—differing from all others, in its outward appearance, and in the independence of thought and action which there prevails. People are tied down by no conventionalisms, but live very much as they please, and perhaps nowhere is the judgment so little based upon the style of a house or the costliness of a carpet.

The public officers, who form that part of the population most seen by a visitor, exhibit in their ranks a singular medley of talent, mediocrity, oddity, and misfortune.

The change which takes place on the approach of a session of Congress, after a long recess, has been most aptly compared to that of a great watering place on the approach of a fash-

ionable season. Then comes the whole coterie of foreigners, gentlemen attracted by curiosity, political demagogues, claimants, patentees, letter writers, army and navy officers, office hunters, gamblers, and blacklegs. Pennsylvania avenue presents a lively scene in the number of strangers from every section of the country, not excepting a representative or two from the Indian tribes.

It is doubtful whether the elements which contribute to make the winters in Washington so agreeable, would, in a large city like New York, give the same tone to society. For there the Government would not be all in all to the place. Thousands of the merchants and scholars from the great cities, who mingle so freely in Washington society, in their abundance of leisure while there, would be absorbed in their own affairs were the Government in the place where they earned their living. Imagine Saratoga Springs in the heart of New York city! Where, for New Yorkers, would be the annual month or two of *abandon* which they now find in the congregation that gathers in that pleasant village? You may secure a delightful company for a dinner party in a few hours' notice in Washington, where a week's notice would be needed in New York in order to get the same persons together.

POPULATION.

In other respects it must be confessed that the anticipations of the founders of the Federal capital were hardly fulfilled. In Jefferson's time the population numbered but about five thousand persons. For the first forty years the increase of population only averaged about 550 per annum. From 1840 to 1850 the increase was about 1600 per annum; and from 1850 to 1860 it averaged 2,000 per annum. By the census of 1860 the population was 61,122. There is no doubt that, for ten or fifteen years prior to the war, the place was in a high state of prosperity, and rapidly assuming the proportions and appearance of a large city. What effect the war will have in advancing or checking this prosperity, depends entirely upon its result, for, as Mr. Southend remarked, this city is "the only child of the Union," and must rise or fall with it.

GROWTH—HOW RETARDED.

The main reason for its slow growth during the first forty years is to be found in the uncertainty which so long existed as to its being the *permanent* Seat of Government.

Having neither commerce nor manufactures

to offer as inducements to men of capital, to remove from places of active business to a city depending for its prosperity upon the apparently unsettled will of a majority of Congress, its population of course had no aids to its natural rate of increase. But the invention of the telegraph seems to have dissipated all uncertainty as to its permanence as a Seat of Government. Prior to that period the Government did little more than keep the public buildings in order, not even inclosing the grounds which connected them, and, as we have seen, even selling them out for a song.

For many years the Pennsylvania avenue was the same slough of mud, with deep ravines, which gave so much trouble to party-goers in Jefferson's time. That President took great interest in the place, as indeed have all the Presidents. But presidential recommendations were little heeded, notwithstanding the fair promises made by Congress, in their reply to Mr. Adams' speech in 1800, when he commended the new city to their fostering care. Mr. Jefferson succeeded in getting four rows of Lombardy poplars planted along the Avenue; but these, though not without beauty in the view from the Capitol, made the road worse than ever by their spreading roots, and it was not until Gen. Jackson's day that an appropriation was ob-

tained to fill up the deep ravines, remove the poplars, and macadamize the street. For a long time no improvement, however desirable, could be obtained without a long and angry debate, because there were strict constructionists, who could not find authority in the Constitution. Few would take the trouble to inquire into the circumstances under which the place was established—and to learn that it was planned rather to suit the future wants of the nation than the convenience of the resident population, who could not be expected, in order to connect public buildings, to open and improve, at once, many miles of unusually wide streets, which, in other cities, would have been the work of time, and in proportion as the population increased. It was in fact a plan calculated for the magnificent capital of a great nation, but oppressive, from its very dimensions and arrangements, to the inhabitants, if its execution to any considerable extent was to be thrown upon them. The expense should at least have been joint. It was as if the New Yorkers, when the population was all below the City Hall, had been required to lay out streets around what is now the Central Park.* Had

* See pp. 60, 68, 70, 71, 72, 75, 76, 82. There is a want of system. The Commissioner of Public Buildings has charge of Government expenditures, while the municipal authorities

Congress only planted trees upon the Mall and other public grounds, much would have been done to add to the beauty and attractions of the place for the wealthy of other cities. Within a few years a more enlightened and liberal spirit has prevailed, and the appropriation for the Aqueduct was the beginning of a new era.

We shall not enlarge upon other causes which retarded the progress of the city—the lottery scheme for building a City Hall, which left a city debt of \$200,000, and the Canal scheme, which left another debt of \$600,000. The extent of the last undertaking, however, demands a short notice.

THE CANAL.

The visitor who has heard so much during this war of the rebel measures to obstruct navi-

expend money raised by taxation, and are held responsible for all deficiencies in street improvements. Works commenced by an appropriation of Congress sometimes go to ruin before a sum is set apart to complete them. Either the Government should take the sole charge of the avenues connecting public buildings, as they have done with Pennsylvania avenue, or they should vote a certain sum per annum in lieu of taxes, to be expended by the corporation, under direction of the President; or should provide that one half of the expense of opening, grading, and paving all streets of a width of one hundred feet or more should be paid by the Government in proportion as the work progresses.

gation on the Chesapeake and Ohio or Cumberland canal, will perhaps have but little idea of the immense national importance at one time attached to that work. It was an attempt to carry out the plan, alluded to in the debates,* of a water connection between the Ohio and the Potomac. Before the cession of the District, Virginia and Maryland had incorporated a company to improve the navigation of the river Potomac, in the stock of which Washington was largely interested. The object was to construct a canal thirty feet wide and three feet deep, as far as the town of Cumberland, in the county of Alleghany, in Maryland, under the confident belief that when that rich coal region should be reached, a new and greatly enlarged source of trade would be opened, which could not fail to enrich Georgetown and Alexandria. In 1823 President Monroe called the attention of Congress to the efforts then recently made to revive interest in the work, and submitted to them the importance of making it to some extent national, by enlarging its dimensions, and extending it to the Ohio river. In 1828 Congress subscribed \$1,000,000 on condition that a new company should double the dimensions, and extend it according to a survey made by Gen. Bernard and others. The estimated

* Ante, page 52.

expense to Cumberland was thus increased from five to eight millions. The city of Washington subscribed \$1,000,000, and Georgetown and Alexandria \$250,000 each. Maryland and Virginia furnished the rest of the money. But, as usually happens, the estimate was less than the real cost. Maryland continued to run up an enormous debt on that behalf; but the policy of Government on the subject of internal improvements having changed, Congress would do no more. The long delay was ruinous to the District. Cities taxed themselves, and borrowed money to pay the interest, until finally the Washington payments of interest ceased, and the Holland creditors* were about satisfying themselves out of a levy upon private property, when Congress assumed the principal, leaving the corporation still involved for money previously borrowed to pay interest to the extent of over half a million. The Canal was finally finished to Cumberland (184 miles) by Maryland, and a large coal trade is transacted upon it, but the benefit all goes to Alexandria and Georgetown; yet the business has not equalled the sanguine expectations of its projectors, and, with the enormous cost of the Canal (\$12,000,000) and the railroad competition, it is doubtful

* A banking firm in Holland furnished the money.

if it will ever pay an interest. Any extension to the Ohio is of course out of the question. When it was first proposed railroads were unknown.

IMPROVEMENTS.

The improvements of late years have been very great; but the space is so large that five or six hundred houses a year make but little impression; and not until there are half a million of people, will the plan be developed to any advantage. There has been too little private wealth to admit of much display, and few of the houses offer any pretensions to good taste, not to say elegance. A manifest improvement, however, is perceptible within a few years.

There is not a church in the place that will bear comparison with those in Northern cities. In a community where so many of the residents are dependent on salaries, and where the congregations are so constantly changing, large investments in pew property are not to be expected. But this does not excuse the shocking bad taste which compels the elderly people to climb a flight of stairs, in order to accommodate the Sunday school children on the first floor. Hotel buildings are also behind those of all other cities.

H E A L T H.

The impression which so generally prevails that Washington is unhealthy, is founded upon the prevalence of chills and fever in some localities. This is the case in all unsettled places on water, south of New England; but disappears as soon as low grounds are all filled up. It formerly prevailed above Twenty-third street in New York. In Washington the population is scattered over so much surface that few streets are thoroughly finished; but the miasmatic influence seems to have departed wherever ravines are filled up, as on the hill north of the Capitol. It is probable that ere long the skill of engineers will devise some method of doing away with the flats in the Potomac near the Long Bridge, which, with the grading of the streets southwest of the President's House, will remove the evil from that quarter. It is remarkable that the chills have never existed in the centre of the settled part of the city—although that horrid Canal, one would think, could not fail to breed a pestilence.

The only wonder is that more deaths do not occur among the strangers congregated here, when we consider their irregularities of life—meals at all hours, and nightly entertainments.

The National Hotel disease was from some local cause, probably an obstruction in the sewer, and has never reappeared.

The monthly published records of deaths show that the mortality here is no greater than in other places, and negatives the notion of there being any disease peculiar to the spot.

CONCLUSION OF HISTORY.

We have traced the history of the place up to the present time, not however touching upon the capture by the British or other details, which have no bearing upon the objects proposed in establishing a Federal city and the extent to which they have been realised. All our remarks, too, are to be understood as applying to the place in time of peace, and not to the present extraordinary state of things when the city is crowded with a population three or four times as great as usual, making it uncomfortable and expensive as a place of residence. Heretofore the value of land has been controlled to a great degree by the wants of those connected with the ordinary operations of Government, and the majority of clerks have been able to lease, and even own property within a reasonable distance of the places of business to far greater advantage than they could in the

same sections of New York, Philadelphia or Baltimore.

Much remains to be done by Government. Residences should be provided for the Secretaries, and the original plan for furnishing lots to foreign Governments should be carried into execution. Other needed public improvements have been glanced at in previous pages. All these will probably be accomplished in course of time.

If it was good policy to build a city expressly for a Seat of Government, it is policy to do it well ; if it was not good policy, it is now too late to undo what we have done.

The history of all nations shows that the political Capital has exercised no small amount of influence, even when not invested with any great power or splendor. As the seat of all the prominent events in the nation's political history, the place where all its public men have figured, and the site of its principal monuments, it becomes a kind of rallying point for patriotism, where new interests are every year concentrated. What Englishman does not feel a double attachment to London for its Westminster Abbey and Hall ! And such, too, is the feeling with which the Frenchman regards Notre Dame, the Tuileries, and the hundred other edifices rich in mementos of the past, at Paris.

Americans have heretofore evinced but little of that patriotic sentiment which hallows particular spots, Mount Vernon being almost the only exception. Probably the city founded by Washington would have shared this interest with his birthplace to a larger extent, had it been more attractive in appearance. Everything about it has been too unfinished to have any of the rust of antiquity. Although covered with dust, it was not the dust of time which gilds over the decay and neglect so long visible at Washington's home. The city was far more attractive to the Southerners than to those from the North, and the former did not leave it without a pang, and some expectation, as intimated by Iverson in the Senate, that when Maryland and Virginia should have seceded, they would again occupy those marble halls, in a climate more genial at all seasons than that of Montgomery. We have, in our opening chapter, given some reasons for the opinion that one consequence of the Rebellion will be an increase of interest in the place on the part of the people generally. Until this war we have had nothing corresponding to the sentiment of loyalty which is so intense in aristocratic countries. State allegiance has interfered with that due to the nation. But the same spirit which has everywhere revived the zeal for our national songs,

and which, amid the turmoil of civil war, has kept the artificers at work and the great dome steadily arising over the Capitol, will lead the visitor to look upon that edifice as our Westminster; bearing, in every hall painting and statue, mementos of the national struggles, and standing on the only territory which is the common property of all, and governed and sustained exclusively by the Union. It is not too much to suppose that, as Englishmen now look back on their own civil wars, so future generations may here look with complacency on the representation of scenes where their ancestors took opposite sides; but from which all will then agree in deducing good.

XXII.

THE CAPITOL.

THE first object which attracts the traveller's attention as he enters Washington by rail, is the Capitol, and, as thus seen, it cannot be said to present a very imposing appearance. Only one end is visible, with a portion of the dome, and the edifice appears to stand all alone, with everything around in a state of incompleteness,—unfinished streets, looking as if they were never to be finished, and here and there, a

shabby building, serving only to give a desolate aspect to the scene.

It is not unusual, on the continent, to see a noble cathedral surrounded by miserable tumble-down structures, many of which are so ancient as to indicate that the shrine never had an appropriate setting; and this circumstance makes the surroundings of the Capitol a matter of less remark to a foreigner than to an American, whose first impressions are that the edifice never will have any buildings around in keeping with its own grandeur; though this would be a very hasty conclusion, if we could only divert our minds from the thought of the civil war and its effects. At all events, there is room for hope here in the future. There is none in the case of the cathedral, for there the past is everything, with no reason for believing that any brighter future will ever arise.

Much of the ground around the Capitol belongs to the Government, and is to be inclosed when the building is completed. The horse railroad has been constructed across it, which will be an unsightly feature, unless a tunnel, or some other contrivance, be introduced to hide it from view.

As you approach the city from the Potomac, the public buildings all appear to great advantage, being on high ground and rising

far above the private buildings, which do not shock by contrast.

It is to be regretted that circumstances alluded to in former papers, have led to the erection of a large proportion of the private buildings at the west, and the abandonment, to a great extent, of Capitol Hill, which, at the first occupation, was regarded as the most desirable. Some of the most commanding positions are those which look toward the Potomac from the New Jersey avenue, where the buildings formerly occupied by cabinet officers and Senators, are turned into workshops for the Coast Survey. Whatever may have been the case formerly, before the low grounds were filled up and drained, there is now no malarial influence to produce sickness, and those who have retained their residences here have become greatly attached to the spot. East of the Capitol, the block to which Mr. Cotton Smith referred, as "an extensive and well-kept hotel," was very lately a depot for the accommodation of contrabands, and is the only erection of any size, except the brick building known as the old Capitol, now used for prisoners of war. The appearance of the square would be decidedly improved, if every building around it were swept away.

One reason why there are so many vacant

lots here, is that the owners valued them too highly ; and, although there has been no demand for the property for nearly forty years, the present proprietors, it is said, had them assessed at a very high figure, in anticipation that the Government would take them for an enlargement of the Capitol grounds, a circumstance which contributed in part to prevent the passage of the bill for that purpose. The owners are now fairly caught in their own trap, as they have to pay taxes on the increased assessment, with no reasonable prospect of a sale to Uncle Sam.

Since the street railroad has made the Hill more accessible, it is to be hoped that there will be some stimulus to new improvement here, especially when the completion of the new extensions shall have led, as it must do, to the opening and finishing of "North Capitol," and other streets.

THE EXTERIOR.

We are not about to write a description of the building in detail. Such descriptions are bores to those who are not able to see for themselves, and those who are on the spot will find guide-books in abundance.*

* Philips' "Washington Described" is the most complete. Some cheaper and smaller work is needed.

Mr. Trollope and others have descanted upon the mistake made in placing the principal front of the Capitol toward the east. But when the building was commenced there was reason for supposing that at least an equal part of the city buildings would be on that side. Besides, such porticos seem to require a level plane or plaza in front, rather than a descent like that on the west. The advantage of this is very apparent, since the porticos are naturally selected for all the great ceremonies, inaugurations, and public gatherings. There is abundance of standing room here for any crowd, however great.

The western front has something wanting to make it as imposing as so large a building should be. The portico of coupled columns in front of the library is handsome as far as it goes, but does not seem to give a sufficient finish—is not prominent enough to arrest attention as one approaches. It has been suggested that, at some future day, the whole of this central front be taken down, and rebuilt in semicircular form, with the same style of columns continued around. The change would be made not solely for appearance, but in order to substitute for the present painted sandstone, a marble casing like that in the new wings. The entrance on this side must needs be altered, to be at all in keeping with the wings; but the terrace may remain

much as it is, and it is doubtful if anything more appropriate or convenient could be devised.

It would seem, however, as if the semi-circular inclosure formed by this terrace might be more tastefully finished than at present. The brick walks and the depots for wood and coal might be made less prominent objects to the eye. A handsome tessellated pavement of marble would be as appropriate as anything. It should be observed that, up to the present time, nothing has been done or planned with regard to the central building, except what relates to the dome.

The dome is now approaching completion, and bids fair to fulfil expectations, at least as to its exterior, which is most appropriately surmounted by Crawford's bronze statue of Liberty. Would that the event could be the signal of returning peace!

The top of the statue (itself $16\frac{1}{2}$ feet in height) will be 287 feet 5 inches above the base-ment of the Capitol, or about 142 feet higher than the old dome. St. Peter's, at Rome, to the top of the lantern, is 145 feet higher. St. Paul's, in London, 73 feet higher.

The Capitol Hill is about 90 feet above ordinary low tide.

The architect says that the two smaller

domes must be removed, and perhaps he is right; but we hope it will not be simply because there is no precedent in their favor in the structures of the old world. In most of the domed edifices of Europe of which we now think, there is either a small extent of building on either side, or there are spires or cupolas to break the space. The Capitol is 751 feet 4 inches long, which is 31 feet longer than St. Peter's, and 175 feet longer than St. Paul's. But in the Capitol the length represents the front, whereas in the other two buildings the width represents the front—and the Capitol presents 237 feet more of front than St. Peter's, and 445 feet more front than St. Paul's, which last building has cupolas in front.*

* The following statement of the size of these three great edifices, furnished by Mr. Walter, architect of the Capitol, may be interesting to the reader:

1st. The height of the *interior* of the dome of the U. S. Capitol from the floor of the rotunda, will be 180 ft. 3 in. The height of the *exterior*, from the floor of the basement story to the top of the crowning statue, will be 287 ft. 5 in. The interior diameter is 97 feet. The exterior diameter of the drum is 108 feet. The greatest exterior diameter is 135 ft. 5 in.

2d. The height of the *interior* of the dome of St. Peter's church, at Rome, is 330 feet. The height of the *exterior*, to the top of the lantern, is 432 feet. The interior diameter is 139 feet. The greatest exterior diameter is 200 feet.

3d. The height of the *interior* of the dome of St. Paul's church, London, is 215 feet. The height of the *exterior*, to the

The Capitol is 286 feet longer than the Treasury building, exclusive of porticos, and 472 feet longer than the Seventh street side of the Post Office Department. It is 535 feet longer than the City Hall at New York, which is elevated a story or half-story in the centre, otherwise the cupola would seem like a mast, on so level a space.

In the Capitol there is no elevation of the centre building, and as the greatest diameter of the dome is 135 feet, there is a space on either side of 308 feet. The smaller domes seem to give some relief to this immense unbroken line of building.

On the other hand, some will say that the solitary dome appears more grand and imposing

top of the lantern, is 360 feet. The interior diameter is 108 feet. The greatest exterior diameter is 150 feet.

4th. The ground actually covered by the buildings of the Capitol, including the porticos and steps and exclusive of the courtyards, is 153,112 square feet, or 652 square feet more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres; of which there is covered by the old building 61,201 square feet, and by the new wings, and connecting corridors, 91,811 square feet.

The extreme length of St. Peter's is 720 feet; extreme width, 514 feet. The extreme length of St. Paul's is 576 feet; extreme width, 306 feet. The extreme length of the Capitol is 751 feet 4 inches; extreme width, 324 feet.

The dimensions of St. Paul's are taken from Gwilt's "account of St. Paul's Cathedral," and those of St. Peter's from Durand's "*paralles des edifices*,"

on such a pedestal. It is purely a matter of taste, and one upon which visitors, and especially those of artistic tastes, may well occupy some of their leisure. On such a subject, the impression made upon the mass of spectators is often the best criterion for a decision as to general effect, and that which is most approved by connoisseurs, frequently gives the least satisfaction to the crowd whom it was intended to please. The City Hall, of New York, is an example. It has been greatly praised, as from an admirable model, but nine out of ten of those who see it for the first time, feel as if they would like to place something more prominent over the centre than the little one-story porch. It may be like the Library at Venice, but it does not please. Everybody admires the Parthenon at Athens, but does it follow that no portion of the Parthenon should ever be taken without the whole? Yet it has gravely been argued by one of no mean note, that we should never omit the lateral colonnades. Let us not be understood in this, or in any other remarks, as setting up our opinion in opposition to those of men who have made architecture and art the study of their lives, least of all to those of the distinguished gentleman who has had principal charge of the Capitol enlargement, and of whom we will observe, that he is not to be held

responsible for everything, as it is understood that his plans were materially interfered with by others. We offer them as our mite toward conveying the impressions made upon an uncultivated mind, and of which no high-minded professional man will hesitate to avail himself for whatever they are worth, in making up his judgment.

The architecture of the central building has been adhered to in the extensions, with one slight deviation. In the central building the lintel, or top of the windows, is perfectly straight, except that it is made of three blocks of stone, the middle one being larger, and like the keystone of an arch. This is not an uncommon feature in old buildings; but conveys the idea of instability, the very opposite effect from that produced by the keystone of an arch. In the wings this has been corrected by giving a very slight arch to the stones on either side of the centre piece.

As compared with European edifices, there are few, if any, that have as imposing a front as the three eastern porticos will present. Of course no comparison can be made with Gothic structures like the Parliament Houses in London. St. Peter's church, at first glance, almost always disappoints the visitor in its exterior; and it is only from a distance, where you see

nothing of the front, that the majestic proportions of the dome are realized. There is an abruptness in the manner in which that front rises, with no relief except in a small piazza, which seems as out of place there as the one on the western front of the Capitol, to which reference has been had. At the Capitol the spectator, at the distance of one or two hundred feet, has the whole structure in all its outlines before him.

The new dome seems to stand too directly upon, and to crowd the portico. But it seems hardly worth while to take down those graceful columns for the purpose of setting the portico further forward, as has been proposed. Nor does it seem right to alter the group in *alto rilievo* upon the tympanum, which is said to have been designed by J. Q. Adams; although it be overshadowed by the larger groups of full statuary, which are to appear upon the other porticos. Let it remain as it appeared to those who witnessed the inaugurations, before the civil war commenced.

Concerning the position of the groups upon this central portico, by Persico and Greenough, the following remark of the last-named artist will apply to both, although made before his own group had been executed.

“The position of the group of Columbus

and the Indian girl is anomalous and absurd; anomalous, because it invades the front view of the portico, crowds the façade, and hides another statue by the same artist; absurd, because it treats the building as somewhat on which to mount into conspicuous view, not as a noble and important vase which it is called humbly to adorn and illustrate. * * * The railings which have been placed around the statues of the Capitol accuse a want of respect for the public property. They accuse it, without remedying it; for, in spite of their protection, perhaps because of it, the statues of Columbus and of Washington have received more injury in the few years that they have been so guarded, than many figures wrought before the birth of Christ have suffered in coming to us through the so-called dark ages."

The lower blocks are finished, without cornice, as if for the purpose of receiving statuary, and it is singular that the groups were not placed there, although it is said that Persico selected the position for his, which, if true, must have been, as a wag remarks, in order that Columbus might have a better height to toss his ball to Washington, who, seated in gymnast-costume in the park, appears to be ready to catch it. Poor Greenough! he was unfortunate in his sculptures for the Capitol, which

have been most severely criticised. But the Jupiter-like attitude of his Washington has provoked so much censure, as to have made men overlook the exquisite details of the work.

THE CENTRE BUILDING.

Most persons who visit the Capitol for the first time, have their attention so much absorbed in the new extension, that they overlook the objects of interest in the central edifice. Yet there is no room in the new buildings comparable in beauty to the old Representatives' Hall. The new halls for the Senate and House may present acoustic advantages, and certainly accommodate the public much better, but no room without columns can present as imposing an effect as one with them. And such columns! There is nothing like them elsewhere. That *brecchia*, or pudding-stone, is too costly to work, ever to be brought into general use. They cost over eight thousand dollars apiece, and there are twenty-four of them. And there is no more beautiful piece of sculpture in the building than the clock in this hall, representing History on a winged car, the wheel of which forms the dial.

It is to be hoped that, whatever the changes made in the central edifice, this splendid Hall

may be permitted to remain, even though it be only as a grand ante-room to the new Hall. When the galleries are removed, it will be an appropriate place for the statuary and paintings which, from time to time, come into the possession of the Government. The relics of Washington, Franklin, Jackson, and others, now preserved at the Patent Office, might be kept here, and, with suitable seats, it will form an appropriate and convenient place for conversation, especially for ladies, the Rotunda being a more appropriate standing place or exchange for gentlemen. These uses can be appreciated in times of great excitement, when every part of the edifice is thronged with visitors. The old Hall, too, is memorable as the scene where all the great men for the first half century of the republic figured. Here Clay presided, Webster made his *débüt*, Adams died! And how full of associations with historical names is every part of the cosy old Senate Chamber! now appropriately occupied by the Supreme Court. Not one person in a hundred notices the *tobacco leaf* capitals of the circular colonnade between this room and the Rotunda; and still fewer ever think of going down the neighboring staircase to look at the *corn-stalk columns* which ornament the entrance to the room formerly occupied by the Supreme Court, now

devoted to the Law Library. In this room the architectural connoisseur will be interested in the arches, springing from massive arched ribs of stone resting on Doric columns.

There are few more beautiful rooms anywhere, than the Library of Congress, although not half large enough. Since the necessity arose, or is supposed to have arisen, of guarding the alcoves with bronzed gates, so that no book can be seen except through the librarian, it has lost many of its attractions to the literary lounge; and is no longer as interesting to the ladies, who, during the pendency of dull debates, whilom found these alcoves such pleasant places for quiet flirtation. The clerk's rooms of the old Representatives' Hall are to be fitted up so as to supply more room, while the Hall itself will be flirtation chamber.

Because John Randolph, in one of his fits of ill-nature, or affectation of wit, designated one of Col. Trumbull's paintings as *the shin piece*, the whole tribe of would-be connoisseurs have felt themselves privileged to denounce the pictures as daubs. As to Randolph's jest, Greenough remarks, "in point of fact this is the last charge which he should have made; nay, if Mr. Randolph had any special aversion to legs, he owed a tribute of praise to the artist for

sparing him in that regard, since of more than forty persons who are there assembled, ten only, show their legs. * * If those who echoed and still echo that paltry jest will look carefully at the 'Declaration of Independence,' they will see that the fact of those legs appearing in small clothes, no longer familiar to the eye, calls attention to them in an undue manner, and they will rather pity the spirit and intelligence which overlooked this difficulty, than blame the painter for an inevitable consequence of the change of fashion. * * I believe I shall be speaking the sense of the artistic body, and of *cognoscenti* in the United States, when I say that the 'Declaration of Independence' has earned the respect of all, the warm interest of such as watch the development of American art, and the admiration of those who have tried their own hand in wielding a weighty and difficult subject. I admire in this composition the skill with which Trumbull has collected so many portraits in formal session, without theatrical effort in order to enliven it, and without falling into bald insipidity by adherence to trivial fact. These men are earnest, yet full of dignity; they are firm yet cheerful; they are gentlemen; and you see at a glance that they meant something very serious in pledging their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honors."

This is thought to be the best of Trumbull's pictures, but they all have an especial interest which overlaughes all trivial defects. The likenesses are all accurate—painted by one who had mingled in most of the scenes he represented—and they are very fair specimens of the art of an infant nation.

In such a structure as the Capitol, we look for a record of progress; and no work is to be condemned because it does not come up to the standard of a later day.

It was well that four of the panels remained so long unfilled; and it may be a matter of regret that they were all filled at about the same time. It is also to be regretted that any artist should have been selected with reference to his section of country, rather than his merits,—as is said to have been the case with regard to Powell, whose "Discovery of the Mississippi" is generally condemned. There is no reason why the artistic work may not be done by degrees. Crawford has filled the tympanum of one portico; let the other rest for a time, and give our rising sculptors an opportunity to present their designs. And so with the frescoes or *alto rilievo* figures which are to ornament the frieze under the dome.

There is a singular appropriateness in the four rather ordinary bas-relief heads which

occupy upper panels of the Rotunda—Columbus, the discoverer of the new world; Cabot, the discoverer of the northern continent; Raleigh, who first promoted settlements on the east; La Salle, who first explored the great river on the west.

The four groups of *alto rilievo* over the doors have their defects, some of the anatomical proportions not being correct—as in the case of the Indian offering the ear of corn, who, if he should rise from the rock, would be a perfect giant by the side of the pilgrim. But the idea symbolized in each group is happily conceived, and the Indians are not bad copies of the genuine aborigines, the critics to the contrary notwithstanding.

So much for the original or Central Capitol edifice, which, with its many dark passages and private staircases, reminds one not a little of some of the labyrinthal castles of the old world.

The great halls are far more imposing than those in the new wings—the great staircases far inferior in beauty to the new ones; but the small zigzag suspension staircase leading to the top is a fine piece of work, each step resting on the one below, instead of being set into it.

THE EXTENSION.

Every visitor to the new wings of the Capitol, must have remarked upon the fact that, with the exception of the staircases, the most costly decorations have been lavished upon rooms which are only accessible to the public at limited times, or by sufferance of those having them in charge. One naturally expects to see the results of artistic skill to the greatest extent in the Halls of the Senate and House, as is the case in the centre building. It seems well enough that marble and frescoes should be used in such rooms as those appropriated to the President and Vice-President, and the Senators' retiring room, the last of which, all of marble, is the gem of the building. But why so many thousands should have been expended on committee rooms, or in painting corridors which are too dark to be seen to advantage, is not apparent. The only reason ever assigned is, that it was desirable to experiment here on different styles of ornament.

There would have been something in this, if the large halls had been so constructed as to give promise that at some future time, the results of this experience might be seen there, for, as before observed, it is not desirable that such work should be done in any haste. But

the new Halls seem to offer no facilities for the introduction of any other ornament than paint and gilding, of which they have already too much. The panels under the galleries are too low for paintings to appear to advantage, as is to be observed in the one which has been filled in the House of Representatives. Perhaps we ought not to object to the use of iron for such purposes in this practical age; and for certain purposes, such as the ceiling, no other material would answer as well; but the walls in front of the galleries might have been finished with some of the variety of marbles, of which nearly every State could have furnished a specimen, as may be seen in the collection at the Washington Monument. There is no marble whatever in the Senate Chamber, and none, except the Speaker's and Clerk's desks, in the House. This deficiency is the more noticed, because of the extent to which this beautiful material is used on the staircases leading to the galleries, which are universally admired. But here it is remarkable that three of the staircases are of the same material. The Tennessee marble is certainly beautiful, but so is the white polished marble of the stairs leading to the west gallery of the Senate. Why could not some other variety have been introduced for those of the House? From the architect's report it appears

that a large quantity of variegated and fancy marble remained on hand which he recommended to be sold. This surely might have been used somewhere. When and where in a public building did polished marble ever appear out of place? But stranger still is the fact, that imitations of marble have been introduced. Witness the iron wash-board in the House, the Scagliola in the Hall with columns, underneath, and the brecchia near the Senate Chamber. This is all wrong. In such a building there should be no sham material by the side of the real article. A little paint, however, will correct this blunder.

Another criticism upon the two great Halls is, that they are so much alike. The main difference is that one is smaller than the other. Conceding that, in certain respects, they had to be alike,—as in the oblong shape and the flat ceiling for acoustic purposes, and the construction of galleries so as to afford an uninterrupted view,—there was surely opportunity for a man of taste to have devised a finish which would have been more distinctive. Some of the marble which is now to be sold might have been appropriated to the smaller room. One of them might have had some windows opening upon the outer world. Both are now placed in the interior, without a window on any side. It

is true they are well lighted both by night and by day through the glass ceilings, and so far as we have observed, the ventilation is good; yet it seems a pity that the rooms had not been constructed with windows, even if they were not to be opened.

Nothing in the old Halls was more refreshing to members, or more agreeable to spectators in the gallery, than the glimpse of green trees afforded through the windows, and such windows would have been the more attractive here, opening as they would have done upon the small porticos north and south. This was Mr. Walter's plan, as appears by his report made in 1852.

It is pleasant to perceive that the architect has taken a hint from the corn-stalk columns, and shown more boldness and originality than is usual with his profession, in departing from the regularly prescribed orders in regard to capitals and other ornamental work. A fine row of monolithic columns is to be seen on the floor of the south extension, under the Representatives' Hall, the capitals of which are composed of the tobacco and thistle. The twenty-four columns and forty pilasters in the grand vestibules are entirely original, the capitals being composed of corn-leaves, tobacco, and magnolias—each of the faces of the columns, as well as the

pilasters, has a magnolia, all different in form and all made from casts of the natural flower. The ornamentations of the ceiling and cornices in the Senate and House are all drawn from the natural products of the country. In the Representatives' Hall are many rosettes composed of the cotton plant in its various stages of growth. No one can fail to observe and admire the exquisite statues of Franklin and Hancock which are appropriately placed in niches opposite the staircases to the Senate gallery. The landings of the staircases furnished most appropriate places for large paintings; like that of Leutze, which improves upon acquaintance and causes every one to linger as he goes to or returns from the gallery of the House.

With reference to the ornamentation of the Capitol, some of the abuses became so marked, that Congress in 1859, wisely authorized a commission of distinguished artists to report upon the same, and the President selected Messrs. Brown, Lumsden and Kensett. Their report, made in February, 1860, presented in a brief space some very sensible suggestions. They say—

“The erection of a great National Capitol seldom occurs but once in the life of a nation. The opportunity such an event affords, is an important one for the expression of patriotic eleva-

tion, and the perpetuation, through the arts of painting and sculpture, of that which is high and noble and held in reverence by the people; and it becomes them, as patriots, to see to it that no taint of falsity is suffered to be transmitted to the future upon the escutcheon of our national honor in its artistic record. A theme so noble and worthy should interest the heart of the whole country, and whether patriot, statesman, or artist, one impulse should govern the whole in dedicating these buildings and grounds to the national honor."

They think that the opportunity which the occasion affords, should be used to protect and develop national art, and that our national history, in its application to the decoration of the public buildings, should take the place of all other subjects; and that, if there be any discrimination between native and foreign artists, the preference should be given to citizens, for this reason, if no other, that foreigners, even such as Horace Vernet, cannot be imbued with a high sense of the nature of the institutions of the country, and that interest in its history which will enable them to embody it effectively in marble or on canvas.

With regard to what had been done, they say:—

"The money expended by Government for

the last five or six years for this purpose has been misapplied, with the exception of commissions like those awarded to Crawford and Rogers; for we find but little else which relates to our history, or in which the American mind will ever be interested.

“The arts afford a strong bond of national sympathy, and when they shall have fulfilled their mission here by giving expression to subjects of national interest, in which the several States shall have been represented, it will be a crowning triumph of our civilization. * * *

“We should not forget so soon the homely manners and tastes of our ancestors, and the hardships they endured with undaunted hearts; but it should be our pride to welcome their venerated forms in these buildings and grounds, and surround them with the insignia of a nation's love and homage; and patriotic hearts should perform the noble work. * * *

“We are shown in the Capitol a room in the style of the ‘Loggia of Raphael;’ another in that of Pompeii; a third after the manner of the Baths of Titus; and even in the rooms where American subjects have been attempted, they are so foreign in treatment, so overlaid and subordinated by symbols and impertinent ornaments, that we hardly recognize them. Our chief delight in this survey is in a few nicely

painted animals and American birds and plants, in some of the lower halls ; and even here one familiar with foreign art sees constantly intermingled and misapplied symbols of a past mythology, but wanting in the exquisite execution and significance of the originals. * * *

“ All passages which, from their situation, cannot be well lighted, should be painted simply in flat colors, with such slight ornaments as will render them light and cheerful ; more than this would be inappropriate. Color should be so arranged as not to add to their obscurity, as in the present instance. In all places where stucco ornaments are exposed to constant mutilation, it is deemed useless to waste money in painting in any other than the simplest modes, as works of art would very soon be rendered worthless and unsightly in situations where every little breakage or abrasion would expose the plaster underneath. * * * Ornamentation in stucco is not properly employed where permanence is desirable. Its meretricious character renders it better suited to temporary purposes, where the employment of wood or bronze would be too expensive. Throughout the building there is a redundancy of ornamentation, cheap and showy in some instances, and employed where ornament is not required ; like the breaking up of large spaces into small ones, thus destroy-

ing the very repose which the eye instinctively seeks.

“There are other instances equally incongruous, where expensive bronze ornaments are fastened upon wooden doorways and jambs, much to their detriment. If it were desirable to enrich the doorways leading to the galleries of the Senate and the House, it should be done by carving the ornaments in the same material of which the doors are made; thus forming a part of them instead of their being detached and fastened on afterward. This would have secured harmony. The bronze employed in the present instance, when seen at the distance of a few yards, on a light ground, has the effect of so many unintelligible dark spots, incapable of light and shade in themselves, and consequently disturbing the general unity of the halls. Carving in wood is a legitimate mode of ornamentation, and is capable of being rendered rich and effective.

“Bronze and marble are no less so when properly applied; but castings from natural objects can never subserve this purpose, because they must always be brought in contact with modelled or mechanically wrought surfaces with which, however beautiful in themselves, they have no affinity or relation. This is a principle in taste long since established, and a departure

from it is an acknowledgement of an inability to fulfil, or an ignorance of the legitimate requirements of art. * * *

“In preparing a plan for the decoration of the Capitol, the commissioners do not recommend its immediate completion, or that its accomplishment should be hastened; for this would not only be injustice to those who come after us, but would necessitate the employment of talents which required thorough training for this particular work. The execution of these decorations must necessarily extend over a long period of time and be subject to the will of Congress from year to year. It is, therefore, of the first importance to establish a system which can be pursued deliberately as the buildings may advance toward completion, and thus secure a harmony and adaptation where otherwise confusion would be the inevitable result. The elaboration of such a system will require great care, study, and consultation, and could not well be embraced within the limits of this Report.”

They make some suggestions as to what is immediately required, and recommend a commission composed of those designated by the united voice of American artists as competent to the office, “who shall be the channels for the distribution of all appropriations to be made by Congress for art purposes, and who shall secure

to artists an intelligent and unbiassed adjudication upon the designs they may present for the embellishment of the national buildings."

If the time ever comes when Congress shall be at liberty to touch upon any other subjects than war and finance, it is to be hoped that some such plan may be adopted.

XXIII.

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.

"Suddenly, as I walked, the dark form of the Smithsonian palace rose between me and the white Capitol, and I stopped. Tower and battlement, and all that mediæval confusion stamped itself on the halls of Congress, as ink upon paper! Dark on that whiteness—complication on that simplicity! It scared me. Was it a spectacle, or was not I another Rip Van Winkle who had slept too long? It seemed to threaten, it seemed to say, I bide my time! Oh, it was indeed monastic at that hour? * * *

"On walking round to the south I was much relieved; I could see through and through the building. This was a departure from all that I had seen in the real old turretted fortresses of theology. It was a good omen.

"I am not about to criticise the edifice. I

have not quite recovered from my alarm. There is still a certain mystery about those towers and steep belfries that make me uneasy. This is a practical land. They must be for something. Is no *coup d'état* lurking there? can they be merely ornaments, like the tassels to a university cap? Perhaps they are an allopathic dose administered to that parsimony which so long denied to science where to lay her head—*contraria contrariis curantur*! They must have cost much money.

“ ‘Bosomed high in tufted trees,’ the Smithsonian college must in itself be hereafter a most picturesque object; the models whence it has been imitated are both ‘rich and rare;’ the connoisseurs may well ‘wonder how the d—l it got there.’ ”

Thus playfully discourseth Greenough, in his “*Æsthetics of Washington*,” upon the Smithsonian building, as seen in a moonlight stroll across the Mall.

No one, indeed, who has a particle of poetry in his soul can fail to be impressed with the picturesque appearance of the pile, as approached from Pennsylvania avenue; but, though he may be gratified that there is one such structure to contrast with the Grecian and Roman architecture which prevails in all the other public buildings, some utilitarian notions will come

over him as he enters the building and finds it hard to discover any special use for all these towers, cloisters, and connecting ranges, which only divide up the interior into inconvenient rooms, few of them adapted to any special purpose. The main building, however, which was the last finished, is provided with a spacious and convenient lecture room; and the museums and philosophical chamber, and picture gallery, in the same building, are well arranged, though the latter is not where designed by the architect. The great defect, as hinted at by Greenough, is want of depth in proportion to length. It is four hundred and twenty-six feet long, with a depth varying from forty-five to sixty-five feet. The roof of the centre building is exhibited to such a degree as greatly to mar the appearance.

Perhaps the best description would be to say that it is unlike anything else in the country, and that no two parts are like each other—a variety which is rather pleasing to the eye, and which is carried out in the interior, even in the furniture. It certainly has this advantage, that it may be extended in almost any direction, and in almost any style of architecture—Elizabethan, or Gothic, Saracenic, or Egyptian—without impairing its effect. With its towers and cloisters, its chapel, its battlements, and portholes like cresses, through which the

knights templars might have shot their arquebusses, and its refectory, over which the ivy is beginning to creep, it does indeed recall accounts we read of the fortified monasteries of former times.

The cost was in the neighborhood of \$300,000, having been built by contract, and perhaps rather too cheaply. Some alterations have since been made which were very judicious, for example the conversion of one wing in part into a residence for the secretary.

The material is a freestone, of a lilac gray color, drawn from a quarry on the banks of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal, near Seneca creek, and but twenty-three miles from the spot. It is said not to be subject to the objections that exist against the Potomac freestone, of which the central building of the Capitol, the President's House, Treasury, and central Patent Office building are constructed, growing harder by time. It does not seem, however, to have become a favorite building material. The Trinity church, in Washington, is the only other edifice we have seen constructed of it. One objection is that, at a short distance, it is mistaken for brick.

The Smithsonian fund has been well managed. It is true that the amount received from England (\$515,000) was lost by an investment

in bonds of the State of Arkansas, which that State, to its lasting disgrace, never paid ; but, by the act establishing the Institution, the sum was supplied from the Treasury, and was perpetually loaned to the United States. The interest from the time it was received, up to the period of organization, amounting to about \$210,000, was set apart as a building fund ; but, by delaying the erection of the edifice, an interest was received on this sum which was regularly re-invested, and by this means something over \$150,000 has been accumulated as an addition to the capital, after expending \$300,000 on the building.

Everybody knows that an Englishman by the name of James Smithson gave all his property "To the United States of America, to found at Washington, under the name of the Smithsonian Institution, an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." But few are aware of the singularity of the bequest. Such a donation from a citizen of Europe would be remarkable under any circumstances ; but it is much more singular coming from an Englishman, endued with no small degree of pride of country and lineage, if we may judge from the pains he takes in the caption of his will to detail his descent from the nobility. He is not known to have ever visited the United States, or

to have had any friends residing here. Mr. Rush informs us that "he was a natural son of the Duke of Northumberland, his mother being Mrs. Macie, of an ancient family in Wiltshire of the name of Hungerford, he was educated at Oxford, where he took an honorary degree in 1786 ; he took the name of James Lewis Macie until a few years after he left the University, when he changed it to Smithson. He does not appear to have had any fixed home, living in lodgings when in London, and occasionally, a year or two at a time, in the cities on the continent, as Paris, Berlin, Florence, and Genoa, at which last place he died. The ample provision made for him by the Duke of Northumberland, with retired and simple habits, enabled him to accumulate the fortune which passed to the United States. He interested himself little in questions of Government, being devoted to science and chiefly to chemistry. This had introduced him to the society of Cavendish, Wollaston, and others, advantageously known to the Royal Society in London, of which he was a member."

In a paper relative to one of the publications of the Smithsonian Institution, read before a scientific society at Dublin, it is stated, on the authority of *Chambers' Journal*, that he had gained a name by the analysis of minute quantities, and that "it was he who caught a tear as it

fell from a lady's cheek, and detected the salts and other substances which it held in solution." In a notice of his scientific pursuits, by Professor Johnson, of Philadelphia, there are enumerated twenty-four papers of treatises by Smithson, published in the Transactions of the Royal Society, and other scientific journals of the day, containing articles on mineralogy, geology, and more especially mineral chemistry. In the *Annals of Philosophy* (vol. 22, page 30) he has a brief tract on the method of making coffee. The small case of his personal effects, which is to be preserved in a separate apartment of the Institution, consists chiefly of minerals and chemical apparatus.

The will indicates a degree of sensitiveness on the subject of his illegitimacy. He starts with a declaration of pedigree. "I, James Smithson, son of Hugh, first Duke of Northumberland, and Elizabeth, heiress of the Hungerfords of Audley, and niece of Charles the proud, Duke of Somerset, now residing in Bentinck street, Cavendish square, do make this my last will and testament."

Nothing but an apprehension that some imputation might be cast upon his birth, would have led him to proclaim that some of the best blood of England flowed in his veins.

Having thus demonstrated that he had no

occasion to be ashamed of his descent, he goes on as if to show his contempt for the distinctions made by the law in such cases, and gives the whole income of his property to a nephew, Henry James Hungerford, heretofore called Henry James Dickinson, for life, and, after his death, the property to the child or children, *legitimate or illegitimate*, of said nephew. On the death of this nephew without issue, the bequest to the United States to take effect.

It has been inferred by some that he must have dictated this will while suffering under some slight or mortification in consequence of his birth, when, in a feeling of disgust he determined to bestow his liberality elsewhere; and so brief an expression does look a little like a mere whim or caprice of the moment, although made long before his death. *Chambers' Journal* mentions that he had at one time bequeathed his property to the Royal Society, but changed the disposition of it in consequence of some offence taken at the action of that Institution. It is a pity that the cause of offence is not given, since it might possibly have thrown some light upon the kind of Institution he had in view; but it is hardly reasonable to suppose that it had any connection with his paternity. The probability is, that he saw in the United States a comparatively unoccupied field, where such an Institu-

tion would exert more influence and be better known than among the crowd of well-endowed establishments in the old world.

The bequest was first announced to Congress by President Jackson, in 1835. Long discussions and reports followed—first upon the propriety of accepting the trust, and next upon the kind of institution to be established; in the course of which the ablest minds in the country, in and out of Congress, gave expression to their views. The report of Mr. Adams was particularly eloquent. The objection to receiving the bequest was based mainly upon the alleged absence of constitutional power, but partly upon policy.

Mr. Preston, of South Carolina, thought the donation had been partly made with a view to immortalize the donor, and that it was too cheap a way of conferring immortality. He had no idea of the District of Columbia being used as a fulcrum to raise foreigners to immortality, by getting Congress, as *parens-patriæ* of the District, to accept donations. If they accepted this donation, every whipper-snapper who had been tra-ducing our country might think proper to have his name distinguished in the same way. It was not consistent with the dignity of the country, to accept even the grant of a man of noble birth and lineage. There were only seven votes against acceptance, however.

The discussion as to the kind of Institution which would best fulfil the testator's intention, extended through a series of years, and led to almost every possible proposition. We shall not attempt to give even an outline of these debates, which finally culminated in the adoption of a somewhat mixed scheme, allowing of almost anything. To Robert Dale Owen, of Indiana, is mainly due the credit of finally pressing the bill to a vote. The act required that there be provided a hall or halls for a library, a museum, a chemical laboratory, necessary lecture rooms, and a gallery of art.

They rendered necessary an annual appropriation to collect and support a library, "not exceeding an average of \$25,000 annually," another to maintain a museum; and indicated an intention that a portion of the annual interest should be applied to the advancement of physical science and arts, in part by lectures. This part of the act may be appropriately referred to as the SPECIFIED OBJECTS.

But, after enumerating these items, the framers of the charter added a clause, authorizing the Board, as to all funds *not herein appropriated or not required for the purpose specified*, to make "such disposal as they shall deem best suited for the promotion of the purpose of the testator." These are the ACTIVE OPERATIONS.

A division at once arose in the Board of Regents, between those who were in favor of confining the expenditure mainly to the SPECIFIED OBJECTS, in the shape of a great library and other materials of knowledge—and those who favored ACTIVE OPERATIONS, in the shape of publications, and encouragements to research and invention. Those who constituted the Board represented nearly every view that had been previously presented to Congress. They were Vice-President Dallas, Chief Justice Taney, Mayor Seaton, Senators Evans, Cass and Breese, Representatives Owen, Hough and Hilliard, and Citizens Rufus Choate, Richard Rush, Gideon Hawley, W. C. Preston, Professor A. D. Bache, and Col. J. G. Totten. Mr. Dallas was elected Chancellor, and, in his address on laying the corner stone, thus alluded to the discussions: “How best to put this Smithsonian Institution in progress; to give it definite character and views; to shape its line of march as Congress has either ordered or intimated that it should be, and to let the testamentary purpose be apparent in all its operations, was a task on which ability and much consultation have been expended. There was—I may almost say—necessarily, and of course there was on this cardinal point, great diversity of sentiment and construction, as there had been during the masterly debates which prefaced the

passage of the law. What constituted "*knowledge*" in the sense of Smithson's bequest? In what manner shall its "*increase*" be provided for? By what methods shall its "*diffusion*" be sought? Should the developments of the laboratory be more engrossing than the stored resources of the library? Will oral exhibitions or printed treatises be preferable? Are permanent professorships to be systematized, or temporary teachers to be enlisted? In fine, what should be the instruments and orbit of an establishment whence the light of knowledge was required constantly to radiate among men?"

As we have not reviewed the discussion which took place before the act was passed, so we shall not now examine in detail the various arguments as to the meaning of the act itself; whether, as Mr. Choate contended, the SPECIFIED OBJECTS were to be principally regarded, and the ACTIVE OPERATIONS only to be considered as secondary, to be resorted to after the first should have been sufficiently provided for; or whether, as Secretary Henry argued, the Board were only called to provide sufficient accommodations for the specified objects, without undertaking to expend large amounts at once upon a great library, museum and picture gallery, all which would be secured in due time, without much actual outlay, by the necessary results of a judicious sys-

tem of active operations: whether a large collection of the materials of knowledge, in itself, tended to increase and diffuse it among mankind, or only among the limited number who might have access to them; whether a distinction could be observed between that which increased knowledge (original discovery, for instance,) and that which diffuses it, or whether the one did not necessarily lead to or comprise the other.

The result of all the talk was, first, a compromise by which one half of the funds were to be applied to specified objects, and the other half to active operations. But, after this had been tried for several years, a majority decided that it did not work well, as the income was not sufficient to make the active operations available for any other purpose, so long as one half the amount was applied to the specified objects—so the division of the income was discontinued, and the whole amount directed to be applied thereafter, in the discretion of the Regents, mainly to the active operations, which were to be carried on chiefly by publication. 1st, “SMITHSONIAN CONTRIBUTIONS,” consisting of the works elicited by rewards offered to men of talent for memoirs containing new truths; and the results of particular researches made by direction of the Institution. 2d, “SMITHSONIAN REPORTS,” consisting of reports on the progress of knowledge. The

first to aid the *increase*, the latter, to aid the *diffusion* of knowledge.

The secretary and his assistants, during the session of Congress, are required to illustrate new discoveries in science, and to exhibit new objects of art: distinguished individuals are also invited to give lectures on subjects of general interest.

The SMITHSONIAN CONTRIBUTIONS are the work of men residing in every part of the United States. Does an individual think he has the data upon which to base an important discovery? He communicates his plans to the Institution. His suggestions are referred to men in other places, who have made that branch an especial subject of study, and who are not advised of the author's name. If they report favorably upon it, the author is furnished with facilities for pursuing and describing his investigations. Does he want some book not to be found in the library nearest his home? The Institution purchases it and loans it to him, to be returned to the library. His work, when finished, may be invaluable to a scientific man, but is not in sufficient demand to warrant any publisher in issuing it. The Institution prints it, with the proper illustrations, and gives the author the privilege of using the plates in order to print a copyright for sale. Those published

by the Institution are sent to every great library and to every scientific body in the world, and those bodies, in return, send back all their publications. Thus, already a most valuable library has been collected, containing books hardly to be found collected together anywhere else in the United States.

Is an expedition about being fitted out for the Arctic Regions, the Rocky mountains, or the unexplored Southwest? The Smithsonian supplies instruments—sometimes money—refers to the men best adapted to aid—and receives in return a report to be printed as above, and hundreds of collections for its museum, which has been rapidly filling up.

The visitors of the Smithsonian will see the finest museum in the United States. True, a large part of it consists of the collections of the United States Exploring Expedition, which are all credited to that source, but are arranged and classified by the Institution along with its own collections, which are nearly if not quite as large. The hall is already crowded, while in the rooms beneath, and those not open to visitors—where Professor Baird and his assistants are constantly at work—are to be seen immense drawers full of preserved birds, beasts and reptiles, and minerals, plants and books, which are either the results of exchanges, or intended to be used for

that purpose. Scarce a college or scientific society in the United States or Europe which has not in this way been brought into acquaintance with the Smithsonian.

Some twelve quarto volumes of "Contributions to Knowledge" have been printed and illustrated in a high style of art—comprising treatises on all manner of subjects, from Indian mounds and languages, to Natural History, Meteorology and Astronomy. Of the merits of these works, and the extent to which they have added to the actual knowledge of mankind, only the learned in the several departments can judge. The annual reports to Congress comprise, in the appendices, information relative to the actual progress of knowledge, within the comprehension of every reader ; and no one can look over that for 1862, just issued, without becoming more or less interested in the comprehensive articles on "Bridges," Asiatic Explorations," "Saint Hilaire," "Coal Oils," "Archæology," &c.

We have thus briefly answered the question—"What is the Smithsonian Institution?"

One thing is very certain : it has a far greater reputation among scholars everywhere than it could have possibly achieved had it simply consisted of a great collection of the materials of knowledge. We have seldom met with a college professor or a student of any *specialité* in science,

who was not familiar with this establishment and its operations. And one evidence of this is the presentation by Prof. Hare of Philadelphia of his extensive chemical and philosophical apparatus. The late Mr. Wynn, of Brooklyn, in his will bequeathing \$75,000, upon a certain contingency, to the Institution, remarks:—"I know no benevolent institution more useful and appropriate." "This circumstance," says the secretary, "is highly gratifying to the friends of the Institution, not because it offers a remote possibility of an increase of the funds, but on account of the evidence it affords of the liberal views of the deceased, and of his confidence in the proper management and the importance of the Smithsonian bequest. Though it is scarcely to be expected that many unconditional bequests will be made, yet the example of Smithson may induce the founding of other institutions, which may serve to perpetuate other names, and increase the blessings which may flow from such judicious liberality. Man is a sympathetic being; and it is not impossible that Smithson himself may have caught the first idea of his benevolent design from the example of our countryman, Count Rumford, the principal founder of the Royal Institution of London. Bequests for special purposes, bearing the names of the testators, are not incongruous with the plans of this

Institution. Lectureships on particular subjects, annual reports on special branches of knowledge, provision for certain lines of research, and libraries for general use or special reference, may be founded under the name of those who bestow the funds, and be placed under the direction of, and incorporated with, the Smithsonian Institution."

Another thing is equally certain : the success of the Institution depends entirely upon the learning and sound judgment of the secretary ; and it is to be hoped that the present able incumbent may live long enough to give such character and solid basis to the operations as may train up others fitted to succeed him. The writer is more ready to pay this tribute, since he was not altogether with Professor Henry in his views at the start, but has been compelled to admire his perseverance through good and evil report—the rigid system of economy and accountability he has established in every department, his contempt of charlatanism of all kinds, and the fulfilment of his predictions thus far.

It is worthy of remark, also, that the necessity which was supposed to exist for a great library of reference has been fully met by the Astor Library of New York and the rapidly increasing library of Congress. The libraries of the Patent Office

and Smithsonian will together form a complete scientific collection.

The influence for good of such an establishment as the Smithsonian is not to be estimated by the display it makes. Some thoughtless people in and about Washington think that a few popular lectures in the winter season, and a collection of bugs and birds and minerals, constitute the whole of it. Those establishments which do their work in the most quiet manner are usually the most effective, and the most substantial results are generally those which require the greatest time to accomplish. The plan of the Smithsonian, like the building, differs from all others in the country—being more like one of the Royal Academies of Europe, such as the National Institute of France. Like that, it will probably give birth to many speculations in science of no value in themselves, but the inquiries thus stimulated cannot fail ultimately to add largely to the knowledge and the comforts of mankind.

XXIV.

THE NATIONAL WASHINGTON MONUMENT.

“Yonder shaft,
Which States and peoples piled the stones upon,
That from its top the very winds might waft
To distant shores, the name of Washington.”

The most interesting fact connected with the Monument is, that *it stands on the site where Washington supposed he was to be commemorated*. In 1783, Congress passed resolutions directing the Minister at Versailles to secure the services of the best artist in Europe, for the preparation of a statue of Washington, “to be erected at the place where the residence of Congress shall be established.”

The Commissioners who planned the Federal City, set apart the place where the Monument now stands, as the site for this statue; and their report, with this provision, was communicated by Washington to Congress. It has been said that the statue by Houdon, in Virginia, was from the cast which Jefferson, then Minister to France, procured, with reference to fulfilling this resolution of Congress; but the statue never appears to have been ordered, probably for want of funds. Like many other acts of the Continental Congress, it was prob-

ably delayed in its execution by the uncertainty which existed about a Seat of Government, as well as the embarrassments incident to a government just emerging from a war, and dependent for all its resources on the action of the States.

PUBLIC SENTIMENT ON SUCH SUBJECTS.

In that day they seem to have considered a monument as the only appropriate testimonial of respect to a great man, and voted one where we should now present a sword or a gold medal. After the battle of Eutaw Springs, a resolution was passed directing one to be erected to General Greene, at the future Seat of Government.

This has never been built. In this connection we may mention, that the cannon taken in the battle were presented to him on that occasion, and were appropriately inscribed. General Greene died three years after the war, leaving a family of young children, and an estate embarrassed by the noble efforts he had made to clothe and feed his destitute army. Under such circumstances the attention of his widow was given to more immediate duties, and, though the medal of the Eutaws, and other reliques, were religiously gathered under the family roof, these bulky cannon were allowed to remain at

West Point, where they would be better preserved than in a private house; and it is well they were not removed to the General's residence, as in that case they would have fallen into the hands of their original owners, Admiral Cockburn having made this house his headquarters for several weeks during the war of 1812. The cannon are still to be seen at West Point, and, should the resolution of Congress be ever carried into effect, they would form a beautiful and appropriate accompaniment to the monument. As a further vindication of public sentiment fifty years ago, we have seen that one of the finest squares in the Federal city (that now occupied by the Patent Office) was reserved by the Commissioners for a National Church, in which to hold services of public thanksgiving, and as an appropriate receptacle for the monuments which Congress might erect to the heroes of the Revolution, or other benefactors. Fifteen squares were to be divided among the several States, to be adorned and improved, and receive monuments of celebrated citizens of the States.

These suggestions of the Commissioners have never been carried out, though they appear to have met with general approval at the time. The only place at Washington, besides the Capitol, where monuments have been erected

by Congress, is the Eastern Burial Ground, more generally known as the Congressional Cemetery. It is not, as has been supposed, public property, by far the greater portion being taken up with private burial lots. The only privilege the Government possesses is that of erecting monuments or buying at a certain fixed price.

Over the graves of Vice-Presidents Clinton and Gerry, and Major-General Brown, are handsome marble monuments, but we remember no other memorial erected by Congress, unless we are to dignify with this name that square, tasteless mass of freestone which, under some standing law or rule, is erected for every member of Congress who happens to die in Washington, whether buried there or not. They are all exactly alike, with the same official inscription, as for example: "Hon. John Quincy Adams, a Representative in Congress from the State of Massachusetts, who died on the — day of February."

An effort was made at the time of Mr. Adams' death to have this altered, so that a monument more befitting an ex-President should be erected; but it was voted down, chiefly from a feeling that it might be an unwise precedent to erect special monuments where the parties were buried elsewhere. The same sentiments

doubtless influenced the rejection of the Senate bill for a monument to General Taylor.

It would seem that it were wiser to abolish the present practice altogether, except where members are buried at Washington, which is rarely the case; or, if it is to be continued, there might be at least a more tasteful block devised, and sufficient variety obtained by giving to each State a particular form, to answer on all future occasions. The delegates of each State might be allowed to decide upon this, and when a member dies, his colleagues might designate some one of their number to prepare a suitable inscription, on their neglect to do which within a given time, the ordinary official title might be cut upon the stone.

The resolutions of the Congress of 1783 were brought to the attention of Congress soon after Washington's death, and elicited long discussions. Objection was made by some prominent members to the erection by Congress of any monument to an individual, however distinguished, on the ground that it was a bad precedent for the Government to engage in any such undertaking. "If we decline," said Mr. Macon, "to rear one to Washington, no one who succeeds him can expect one reared to his memory. On the other hand, if we erect one, every pretender to greatness will aim at the same dis-

tion." Reference was made to the abuses which had grown out of the system in Europe, and the ground was taken that they should be the results of individual effort—voluntary contributions. But the sentiment of the country has been rather favorable to such structures. Not only has Congress erected two statues; but in almost every State more or less action has been taken on the subject.

The legislatures of Virginia and North Carolina have erected statues in their State Houses. The first is by Houdon, a good likeness, in the costume of commander-in-chief, which has been objected to by critics as not sufficiently graceful and classical; the second by Canova, in a sitting posture, with the Roman costume. There is one at the State house, at Boston, by Chantry; the costume is a military cloak, which displays the figure to advantage. Neither of the two last are good likenesses, the artists having embodied their ideas of Washington's character, rather than attempted any resemblance. The statue by Greenough, before referred to, is in a sitting posture, and is admirably executed. The likeness is perfect; the costume Roman, which, whatever the classical scholar may say, does not suit the taste of a majority of those who see it. Virginia has, within a few years, erected a very grand monument at Richmond,

in which Washington stands surrounded by the other great men of the revolutionary period, in that State. Maryland has reared one in Baltimore; a noble column. The battle monument at Baltimore; those at Bunker Hill, Concord and Lexington; the equestrian statue by Brown, in Union Place, New York; and those by Mills, of Washington and Jackson, at Washington, all attest a taste for some such substantial memorial.

EFFORT TO REMOVE WASHINGTON'S REMAINS.

To return to the action of Congress on this subject. In 1799 they directed President Adams to correspond with Mrs. Washington, and ask her consent to the interment of the remains of her illustrious husband, under a monument to be erected by the United States in the Capitol at the City of Washington. Mrs. Washington gave her assent in the following letter:

“Taught by the great example I have so long had before me never to oppose my private wishes to the public will, I must consent to the request of Congress which you have had the goodness to transmit to me; and, in doing this, I need not, I cannot, say what a sacrifice of individual feeling I make to a sense of public duty.”

But the monument was not erected, and the remains, therefore, were not removed from Mount Vernon.

In 1816 the subject was revived in a report by Mr. Huger, of South Carolina, from a joint committee for a public monument and the removal of the remains, but nothing was done. In February of the same year the legislature of Virginia authorized Governor Nicholas to apply to Judge Bushrod Washington, then proprietor of Mount Vernon, for leave to remove the remains of General and Mrs. Washington from Mount Vernon to Richmond, to be placed under the monument proposed to be erected to the honor of Washington, at the capital of the State. Judge Washington declined, and, among other reasons, stated the following :

“But obligations more sacred than anything which concerns myself—obligations with which I cannot dispense—command me to retain the mortal remains of my venerated uncle in the family vault where they are deposited. *It is his own will, and that will is to me a law which I dare not disobey.* He has himself directed his body should be placed there, and I cannot separate it from those of his near relatives, by which it is surrounded.”

Mr. John A. Washington declined, on a similar ground, a proposition made by Congress in

1832, to remove the remains of General and Mrs. Washington to a vault under the rotunda of the Capitol. The legislature of Virginia, on this occasion, passed resolutions earnestly requesting him not to consent, which action was supposed to have been prompted in some measure by the desire to retain those sacred relics south of the Potomac, in the event of a dissolution of the Union, which the nullification excitement seemed to render possible.

But on all subsequent occasions, when a project for purchasing Mount Vernon or removing the remains has been mooted, they have taken action to prevent it. At last the ladies took the work into their hands and secured the estate, so that it will at least be kept in decent order, and the body continue to repose in the old vault.

ORIGIN OF THE PRESENT WORK.

On the 26th of September, 1833, a number of citizens of Washington digested a plan for the erection of a monument which, in the language subsequently used by Mr. Winthrop, should "bespeak the gratitude, not of the State, or of cities, or of Governments, not of separate communities, or of official bodies; but of the people, the whole people of the nation: a na-

tional monument erected by the citizens of the United States of America.”

Among the names of national reputation connected with the enterprise, are those of Chief Justice Marshall, Judge Cranch, Gen. Scott, and Presidents Polk, Fillmore, Pierce and Buchanan. The Gales, father and son, Peter Force, W. W. Seaton, Thomas Carberry, and George Watterston, have been among the most active working men in the Board, and not a whisper against those engaged in the management, of want of good faith, or other than scrupulous and economical application of the funds to the object, has ever been heard; while not one of them has ever directly or indirectly, received any compensation.

At first the plan was to raise the funds by dollar subscriptions; but the whole collection amounted to only \$28,000, when, owing to the financial embarrassments of the country, the collections were suspended.

But the amount on hand was invested, and the interest regularly re-invested, so that it had increased to \$40,000 when the new collection was begun in 1846. This was not limited as to the amount of any one subscription, and the whole amount collected up to May 1, 1854, was \$231,000. Since that time there have been few agents out, and the receipts at the monument

have amounted to little more than enough to keep the machinery in preservation, and protect the monumental stones presented by different associations and States, some of which are very large and costly.

THE DESIGN.

As to the design, it is not easy to say what would have best suited the public at large, and satisfied to a reasonable degree the critics. For our own part we should have thought that something might have been designed more peculiarly expressive of its object and more American in its details, less of a mere imitation of the ancients, something which would have embodied in it the trees and products peculiar to our country, something a little less like a second edition of Bunker Hill Monument, and which could present internal as well as outward attractions. We should have preferred the Pantheon without the obelisk, when doubtless each State would have contributed a column, instead of simply a stone.

But our artists and architects have not heretofore shown much originality or taste in devising monuments on a large scale, whatever may be said of smaller works in cemeteries. Some years ago the committee for erecting a monu-

ment at Hamilton Square, in New York, advertised for plans, and some forty or fifty designs were sent in and exhibited at the Art Union. A more grotesque and absurd looking group of lighthouses, pyramids, and nondescript looking structures never were got together.

Only one, that of Frazee, received the faintest modicum of praise, and that, if we recollect right, was a superb copy of the Parthenon, to cost about five millions of dollars! After this exhibition of what a number of artists could offer, we became reconciled to the design of the National Monument, which, either as a whole or as a simple obelisk, was far superior in every respect to anything here presented.

It is understood that the obelisk, on a broad base, is all that is at present designed, so that the union of Greek and Egyptian architecture, which has provoked so much remark, will not be found.

And the obelisk presents some decided advantages—

First. It is of all monuments the strongest and most enduring, next to that of the pyramid. In 1800, when the question in Congress was between adopting the statue of '83, or a mausoleum, in pyramidal form, it was stated in debate that, without any concert whatever, a remarkable concurrence had taken place between

West, Trumbull, and other respectable artists, who gave an unequivocal preference to a mausoleum. A mausoleum would last for ages, and would present the same imperishable appearance two thousand years hence that it would now; whereas a statue would only remain until some civil convulsion or foreign invasion or flagitious conqueror, or lawless mob, should dash it into atoms, or until some invading barbarian should transport it as a trophy of his guilt to a foreign shore. Besides, a statue was minute, trivial, perishable. It was a monument erected to all that crowd of estimable but subordinate personages that soar in a region elevated indeed above common characters, but which was infinitely below that of Washington. At that session, after a long discussion, a bill passed one House for the erection of a "mausoleum of American granite and marble in a pyramidal form, 100 feet square at the base and of a proportional height."

Secondly. It is like the Government and character of Washington, simple and majestic, with no attempt at ornament. It cannot well be spoiled in building, or by bad sculpture. We could not hope to rival the magnificent productions of the Old World in structure, however creditable the works of our artists may have been in one or two instances.

Thirdly. It will excel all others in one respect, that of height, as will be seen by the following comparison between this and some of the principal monuments and churches :

<i>No.</i>	<i>Height—feet.</i>
1. St. Antoine's Column, at Rome,	135
2. Principal Tower of Smithsonian Institution,	145
3. Trajan's Column, at Rome,	145
4. Napoleon's Column, at Paris,	150
5. Washington's Column, at Baltimore, . . .	180
6. The Great Obelisk, Thebes,	200
7. Bunker Hill Monument, Boston,	220
8. Column of Delhi,	262
9. Trinity Church, New York,	264
10. Capitol (Dome), Washington,	287
11. St. Paul's Cathedral (Dome), London, . .	360
12. St. Peter's Cathedral (Dome), Rome, . .	432
13. Great Pyramid of Egypt,	461
14. Tower of the Cathedral of Strasbourg, . .	474
15. National Washington Monument,	517½

The obelisk commences at a height of 17½ feet above ground, which is the height of the platform or pedestal, to extend on every side over arched rooms.

It is 55 feet square at the base. Only by pacing around can one realize that it covers more space than most large double houses. It is now about 180 feet high. Will it ever be finished? Yes, if the Union is ever restored, but not otherwise. Its progress heretofore has

been just in proportion with renewed confidence in the permanence of the Union. The passage of the Compromise measures led to a sudden elevation of the shaft, and the Kansas troubles caused the work to stop. The subscriptions at the South were greater, all circumstances considered, than at the North. In its present state it not unfitly represents the torn and distracted condition of the Union. Every State is there represented by an emblematical block, and should the States again return to a united Government, who can doubt that these blocks will be speedily placed in their appropriate positions by the unsolicited contributions of a joyous people.

It can only be a fitting monument to Washington, as a monument also of union.

XXV.

THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE AND ITS OCCUPANTS.

The principal entrance to the "White House" is at the north front, where the portico is so constructed that carriages may drive under—a great convenience, but making the portico rather too large to be in good proportion.

The south or "river front" is much the more symmetrical, though seldom seen by vis-

itors except on "music days" in the summer. Many years ago a circular road was opened on that side for convenience of access to the Navy Department; but it is not on the plan, and will probably be entirely closed when the grounds are completed, as it will greatly mar the appearance, and is not really needed unless as a path for pedestrians. If the drive from the Capitol through the Mall is ever completed, it should branch out soon after entering the President's grounds, so as to lead to the gates on the right and the left.

The encroachment of the Treasury building upon the President's mansion has been before adverted to. While the grand southern portico of the Treasury is certainly very ornamental, the western front cannot be seen. Consequently, a street will have to be opened between the two edifices.

To make matters worse, a new and very common looking stable has been erected between the Treasury and the President's house. One would have supposed they might have found a less prominent place on the other side.

The first occupant of this object of American ambition was John Adams, who must have had a rather uncomfortable time, for it was of this house that Mrs. Adams wrote as follows :

"The house is upon a grand and superb

scale, requiring about thirty servants to attend and keep the apartments in proper order, and perform the ordinary business of the house and stables—an establishment very well proportioned to the President's salary. The lighting the apartments from the kitchen to parlors and chambers, is a tax indeed, and the fires we are obliged to keep to secure us from daily agues is another very cheering comfort. To assist us in this great castle and render less attendance necessary, bells are wholly wanting, not one single one being hung through the whole house, and promises are all you can obtain. This is so great an inconvenience, that I know not what to do or how to do.

“The house is made habitable, but there is not a single apartment finished, and all within side, except the plastering, has been done since B. came. We have not the *least fence, yard, or convenience without*, and the great furnished audience room I make a drying-room of, to hang up the clothes in.” * * *

This audience room, now known as the “East Room,” was, we think, not furnished until General Jackson's time, although completed after a fashion.

The interior arrangement of the rooms is generally good; but the appearance of the

building on entering is far from imposing, and might be greatly improved.

A handsome circular marble staircase, with a well to the roof, would give opportunity for an ornamental dome-like ceiling or skylight. The present staircases are all concealed, and by no means ornamental. The executive business offices and library occupy full one half of the second story, so that the family rooms are not as numerous as might be expected in so large a house.

In Mr. Adams' time this was not the case, as the President's business was mostly transacted in two rooms. It was not until General Jackson's administration that the private secretary was paid by the Government as "secretary to sign land patents." Now there is a private secretary besides, we believe, and in course of time several assistants will be required, as the mere examination of and answering letters is far more than any two men can do.

Until very lately, the expense of sustaining the establishment devolved entirely on the occupants. Now, besides the secretaries, Congress pays the salaries of doorkeepers and gardeners, and of lighting and warming the building.

Until gas was introduced in Mr. Polk's time, the cost of candles for lighting the great rooms was no inconsiderable item. As the greater

part of the house is far more used by the public than by the President, it is highly proper that these expenses should be defrayed by Uncle Sam.

Until the time of Mr. Fillmore there was no library. The circular room in the second story is now gradually filling up with a good selection of books.

The next tenant was Mr. Jefferson, the idol of the Democratic party of that day,—a very remarkable man; a statesman, a philosopher, and a French Republican, dabbling a little in almost every department of literature and politics. The simplicity of his dress and personal habits excited much ridicule from foreigners, but made him popular with the masses. He and his predecessor were great rivals, representing opposite political parties at a time when party spirit was so violent that it interfered with private intercourse. The two great leaders, however, became great friends after both had retired; and, what is very singular, both died on the same day, and that day the Fourth of July. The statue in the north inclosure is of Jefferson, placed there by Capt. Levy, who owned Charlottesville.

The residence here of James Madison was made brilliant by the accomplishments of Mrs. Madison, who long survived him, occupying

the house now owned by Admiral Wilkes, on Lafayette Square. Once, during his administration, he had to fly with his family to avoid capture by the British, of which an interesting account is given in C. J. Ingersoll's History of the War of 1812. On this occasion the painting of Washington, which now hangs in the family room, was cut out from its frame by Mrs. M., and thus preserved. The British soldiers found a good dinner in readiness, which they disposed of before firing the building. Much sport was made of the figure of "Jimmy Mad. running away from his bacon to save his bacon," by the Federal prints. After his return he occupied a brick building at the corner of 20th street and the Avenue until the house was repaired, nothing but the walls having remained after the fire.

James Monroe, with less ability than any of his predecessors, was very generally respected, and had a comparatively easy time of it, as he was fortunate enough to reign during the "era of good feeling." He had an interesting family, and his court was very attractive for his elegant and refined hospitality.

Next we come to John Q. Adams, or "Johnny Q.," as he was generally called. Who that ever saw him will forget his bald head and frosty locks and modest mien, as he took his

daily walk along the Avenue? He was probably the most learned in various branches of knowledge of any President. He entertained with great refinement and gentility, and continued to do so long after he descended from the Presidency and became, as his official tombstone hath it, "a Representative from the State of Massachusetts," living in his own house—for he owned, and his descendant still owns, considerable property in Washington. He planted the trees on the west of the mansion.

Up to this time all the Presidents succeeded to that station from either that of Vice-President or Secretary of State. They were consequently all, as it were, educated to the office.

Gen. Jackson had been Senator, and was well known to the country as a military chieftain, but had not the finished education of the others; and, though possessed of abundant capacity, as is now admitted, for the direction of affairs, had to rely on his secretaries to embody his views in writing.

His popularity was so great that his levees were crowded with people of all sorts and conditions, who took very little pains to brush off the dirt or put on their Sunday suits. The waiters found it impossible to carry around the cake, wine and lemonade, and refreshments were no longer supplied. Tall and erect in

figure, with iron-gray hair like bristles, his appearance as he promenaded in his neat black costume was always impressive. He was the man of iron will, greatly abused in his day, but greatly honored in memory now. He was a widower, but Mr. Donelson, his private secretary, had an accomplished family who did the honors well.

President Jackson took great interest in the improvement of the city. He planned a bridge of stone arches across the Potomac, the erection of which was stopped by Congress on account of the expense. Such a bridge would be a great blessing now, in place of the present rickety structure.

Vice-President Van Buren was promoted to Gen. Jackson's place,—a peculiarly dignified President, able and accomplished.

It was during his administration that Ogle, of Pennsylvania, made a celebrated electioneering speech which consisted mainly in an enumeration of the articles of furniture in the east room. That room was no better furnished than any other room in the house; and none of them were as well fitted up as most gentlemen's private parlors—nothing to compare with the parlors of the present day;—and Mr. Van Buren had really had nothing to do with the expenditure of the appropriations further than to de-

pute the work to the Commissioner of Public Buildings. But Ogle made it appear as if every French vase or other ornamental article imported for the purpose, had been brought there to invest His Highness Martin the First, with regal magnificence. It was spoken of by Levi Lincoln and other honorable Whigs, as a contemptible trick, but it had its effect in elevating Gen. Harrison to the Presidency, for the more ignorant people swallowed it all, along with the song—

• “Van, Van
Is a used up man.”

Poor Gen. Harrison only survived his inauguration one month; run down by the crowds of office seekers, and not fitted by his previous retirement for such a trial: an amiable man, but not remarkable for anything except the battle of Tippecanoe. His was the first funeral from the White House, and we shall not soon forget the peculiarly solemn effect of the Portuguese hymn, played upon trumpets, as the coffin was brought out to be placed upon the funeral car.

Then came John Tyler, the first “accidental President,” and the first Vice-President, except, perhaps, Richard M. Johnson, who had been placed second on the ticket, when he

would never have been dreamed of for the first position. He deserted the party who elected him, without gaining favor with the opposite side, and retired with no laurels; although he was a man of large experience in public affairs, and no ordinary talents. The annexation of Texas, which led to the Mexican war, took place during his term. Mrs. Tyler died soon after her husband became President, and hers was the first female funeral. Six months before the expiration of his term, he married the lady who is now his widow.

James K. Polk, or "Young Hickory," who defeated Mr. Clay, is admirably represented in the painting which hangs in the rotunda. An English traveller well described him as looking like a dissenting minister. Mrs. Polk was a most accomplished *maitresse du maison*. The Mexican war was the event of this administration.

President Taylor, like Harrison, found the toils of high station too much for him. His field was a military one, and he came to the White House with no experience of politicians, being the only President who had never served in either branch of Congress, although possessed of much decision of character, and excellent practical common sense. After six months, a

funeral car carried away his mortal remains, followed by his war horse, "Old Whitey."

The accomplished Fillmore took his place. Under no administration has the White House appeared to more advantage. The Compromise measures, which were intended as "a final settlement" of the slavery question, were the leading feature of this administration. The Whig party was divided upon them; Mr. Seward and his friends opposing, and the Fillmore men, or Silver Grays, supporting the plan. Mrs. Fillmore died in Washington a few days after leaving the executive mansion, and her accomplished daughter, Miss Fillmore, survived her but a few months.

Franklin Pierce was the next occupant, the youngest of the Presidents, and his election, like that of Polk, was more owing to the rivalry of other candidates, than to any particular prominence as a statesman. He had an able cabinet, and commanded respect by his personal appearance and graceful manners. Mrs. Pierce was a great invalid, and seldom saw company. Mr. Douglas saw fit, during this term, to re-open the slavery discussion by his Kansas bill, which was the cause of our present troubles.

James Buchanan, or "Bachelor Buck," as the song had it, disappointed expectations of

superior ability which his long career in the Senate had led the public to form. He was glad to leave the cares of the Presidency on other shoulders. This is no place to discuss the errors which made the close of his career so saddening for the country. Miss Lane, his niece, did the honors most elegantly. For the first time the heir to the British throne became a guest at the President's House.

Abraham Lincoln has lived through more than half of his term, over a divided country. How he will end it no mortal can imagine!

It is worthy of remark that no President has retired with any considerable private fortune, unless possessed of one before he was elected. This is a very creditable fact, considering the opportunities for corruption which are supposed to exist. Only three out of the fifteen had any middle name. Three were widowers when they entered upon office—one a bachelor, and of those who had been married, five were childless.

Of late years it has been customary for the Presidents to occupy in the summer one of the marble residences intended for the physician at the army asylum, north of the city, and no doubt if the Government ever becomes settled, a suitable residence will be erected in that neighborhood expressly for the purpose. As

the President can seldom be absent from Washington for any great length of time, it is desirable to furnish himself and family with some such place of retirement, quite as much to relieve him from the crowd, as on account of any malarial exposure at the White House, which has been greatly exaggerated, and will gradually disappear entirely as the low grounds are filled up and the river channel improved by the removal of the immense causeways which now form a part of the Long Bridge.

XXVI.

THE DEPARTMENTS.

It is only by walking through the various Departments that one can form an idea of the extent of the business of the country. The Treasury, the Patent Office, and the Post Office edifices alone would cover a space large enough to accommodate nearly twenty such buildings as the New York City Hall. Then there is the Pension Office, the State, and the War and Navy Departments, and whole rows of private houses rented for public purposes. Of course the war has added largely to the requirements in this respect; but even before the hostilities commenced there was a demand for more office

accommodation. Doubtless this is partly owing to the number of political hacks who are always in office, and who are totally inefficient as clerks; but that is one of the evils in the administration of our Government which cannot be cured, and must therefore be endured. Uncle Sam must always pay twice as much as an individual would, for poorer work.

GRECIAN PORTICOS.

The American taste for Grecian porticos has been the subject of much comment on the part of foreigners. Such entrances to white pine structures may well excite ridicule; but on great edifices like those in Washington they are the only appropriate finish, and are certainly numerous enough to gratify all fancies, as there will be no less than twelve—three on the Capitol, two on the White House, three on the Treasury, three on the Patent Office, and one (very chaste) on the City Hall. Of course none of them equal in richness or splendor the Corinthian columns of the Capitol; but the massive Doric of the Patent Office is imposing, and the exquisite symmetry of that on the Treasury, with its numerous monolithic shafts, of the Ionic order, is to our mind by far the most pleasing.

MATERIAL.

The Centre Capitol, the President's House, the colonnaded or older portion of the Treasury, and the Centre Patent Office, are all built of the Virginia freestone, which is excessively porous, and consequently would cause great dampness in the interiors, were it not for a thick coat of white lead, which is applied about once in ten years, at an enormous expense. The stone in its natural color may be seen in the porticos of the City Hall. After the experience in the two first-named buildings, it is surprising that some new material should not have been used for the others. In all the extensions, granite or marble has been substituted. The south wing and western portion of the Treasury are finished with huge blocks of granite, each of which extends from basement to eaves. It will become necessary to paint the colonnade to resemble granite.

At the Patent Office the wings are of marble, but, strangely enough, they have also used this material for the basements, which might as well have been continued in granite, which is used on the centre basement, and which has consequently been painted white, and as it does not take paint well, it looks very badly. What is more singular, the walls of the quadrangle or

inner court have been constructed of granite on three sides, so that the fourth must be painted and sanded to correspond. Why the architect should have been so liberal with granite here, and so stinted in front, is a puzzle, unless it be explained on the ground that it was not properly used in the basement in the first instance. This may be admitted, and yet, to our notion, having once been adopted, it would have been in better taste to have made all uniform.

It is to be hoped that, in any building hereafter to be erected, some one material may be used throughout the front, as at the Post Office Department.

There is now so large a representation of marble and granite, that some of the Northern fine-grained freestones might be introduced so as to give variety and effect.

POSITIONS.

In a previous article we have stated the positions designated by the Commissioners for these buildings. The blunders afterward committed were repeated in the case of the Treasury *extension*, without the excuse of ignorance which might be pleaded for Gen. Jackson and Architect Mills in the original building. That error was pointed out and commented upon by

the Committee of Public Buildings; yet, as if it were not enough to have shut off the view of the executive mansion through F and G streets, the enlargement has been contrived so as to destroy the pleasant glimpse of the White House and its foliage, which was formerly to be had from the Avenue and the Capitol. It is true we have instead thereof the superb portico of the Treasury, but it might have been placed so as to have appeared to greater advantage and not conceal the other building. President Pierce, to his credit be it said, saw the mistake, but his efforts to arrest the work were in vain. The position of the Patent Office would not be bad, if it were not so far removed from the other executive offices; but it was a great mistake to have placed the Post Office immediately in front of one wing, unless the other wing could be set off by some similar edifice, or at least by an open square; and we must again urge the importance of the Government's becoming the owner of the square immediately west of the Post Office before it is more improved.

The Patent and Agricultural Bureaus ought to be nearer the Smithsonian, so as to have all the scientific institutions together; and it is to be hoped that one or both of these will one day be accommodated with a suitable edifice on the

ground immediately west of the Smithsonian Square. The present building might then be surrendered entirely to the Interior Department, which now occupies the greater portion.

THE TREASURY.

The interior of the Treasury extension is in striking contrast to the older portion, although that was, to American eyes, attractive from its solidity and extent of vaulting, and its suspension staircases. The rooms in the new edifice are larger and far better adapted for their purposes; and, when the old State Department shall have given place to a northern wing, the immense length of the passage ways will in itself be a remarkable feature, though even then it will not be as long as the Capitol by over two hundred feet.

The ornamental work, which is chiefly to be seen in the offices of the Secretary and of the Attorney-General, in the shape of paintings *à la fresco*, and bronze candelabras or gas fixtures, is most appropriate, illustrating as it does the products of every State and the Indian Territories.

We might have indulged in reminiscences of the many men of mark who have from time to time presided over this Department, but

that would be too extensive a topic for what are only intended as outline sketches. Everybody knows that Alexander Hamilton first set the machine going, and his system of accounts has been adhered to ever since. Albert Gallatin is another name of mark.

Levi Woodbury, we think, had the longest continuous charge in this position, having been transferred to this portfolio from the Navy Department by Gen. Jackson, and continued in office under Mr. Van Buren. One of the names of greatest note was John C. Spencer, of New York.

Secretary Chase was, in John Quincy Adams' time, a student in the office of the then Attorney-General, William Wirt, and also the teacher of a famous classical school near the President's—a circumstance which he may refer to with a just degree of pride.

The same remark which we made with regard to the Presidents, will apply to the Heads of Departments generally. Few of them have retired with any considerable property. They may have thrown fortunes in the way of others, but they seem to have participated but little in the results. One of them died a clerk in the Department over which he once presided.

In the Attorney-General's office are creditably executed portraits of all who have held

the position. Of these, Pinkney and Wirt were perhaps the most distinguished; but, with few exceptions, all have been eminent lawyers.

Let us hope that, when the State Department shall have been established in an edifice more suitable for the first in rank, the example in regard to the Attorney-General's will be followed, in the collection of something in a higher style of art than the engravings and lithographs which are now to be seen on the walls.

THE PATENT OFFICE.

The Patent Office has the advantage over the Treasury of a square to itself, and few edifices anywhere have attracted more general admiration. In none is there a greater variety of subjects under consideration, for it is in fact the Department of the Interior, and ought to bear that name. Few visitors see or appreciate the Scientific Library on the first floor, where are preserved the splendid records of the English and Continental Patent Offices. The immense collection of beautifully finished models, which are seen by all, but which not one in a thousand examines with more than a passing glance, is a wonderful record of ingenuity. Few, however, of all these machines have paid the inventors for their labor. Many are for the merest trifles

—trash, but perhaps original. Many are attractive in models, but failures on a large scale. In the Agricultural rooms are abundance of specimens of wonderful fruits and seeds; insects which are friends of the farmer, like the mantis or rear-horse (one of the curiosities of insect life, abounding in Washington in October); and insects which are his enemies, like the weevil. Now that this has attained the dignity of a separate bureau, it is to be hoped that it will send out something more valuable than the bundles of scraps yclept Reports have heretofore proved to be. It should be here mentioned that a very creditable beginning has been made in a propagating garden on Sixth street, a little south of the National and Clarendon hotels. (This should not be confounded with the conservatories immediately in front of the Capitol, which owe their foundation to the collections of the South Sea Exploring Expedition.) These gardens furnish an additional reason for accommodating this Bureau on the Mall near the Smithsonian Institute. Then we have the Indian Affairs, the Commissioner of which not unfrequently receives visits from delegations of the tawny sons of the forest, in full array of paint, feathers, gewgaws, and dirt; public lands, which Congress has been doing its best to get rid of by all sorts of schemes for the ben-

effit of actual settlers. The Census every ten years brings into service a large army of clerks. These are but a few of the many subjects under the supervision of this Department, which is emphatically the Department of Peace. Its operations are very large, although the effect of the civil war is everywhere visible.

If by looking at them now we realize the immense operations of the Government, how much more forcibly does it bring home to us the recklessness of those who, on so slight a pretext, have interrupted the development of this mighty nation in all the arts that pertain to the civilization and comfort of mankind.

XXVII.

THE ARSENAL.

THE street which is dubbed by the delectable name of "Four and a half" extends from the front of the City Hall in a direct line to Greenleaf's Point at the intersection of the Eastern Branch with the Potomac, at a distance of about a mile and a half from the Avenue.

Time may come when this will be a very pleasant drive, but, as the ground is perfectly flat and the negroes and poor Irish have formed extensive settlements in that direction, it would

seem as if it could never be made a very inviting street—certainly not for a long period; as there is little demand for lots in this quarter, for business purposes, and less for substantial dwellings to take the place of “small frames” which now so much abound. And this leads to the remark, in passing, how seldom we find anything like an attempt at making laborers’ houses attractive, by even the most common shrubbery or flowers! Here they do not even appear to make use of their spare ground for the popular purpose of planting cabbages—perhaps for the reason assigned in Mrs. Adams’ time, that “the ground is too valuable.” A better reason however is to be found in the intense effort which many of the occupants are obliged to make in order to get a living by their ordinary occupations. They have no time for indulging in the ornamental.

We have elsewhere adverted to the fact that this part of the City was regarded in the beginning as most promising, and that large fortunes were sunk in property which is now hardly worth the taxes. Shortly before entering the Arsenal grounds, we pass, on the right, the only row of buildings which was ever completed. The chimnies of twenty others long remained as a monument of disappointed hopes.

Most inviting in appearance are the Arsenal

grounds,—neat walks everywhere, and green grass sprinkled over with little pyramids of cannon balls, with every now and then a huge cannon of such pattern as is to be found in great fortifications. Some of these are of brass, trophies taken from the English and the Mexicans.

If you enter the Armory you will see many a thousand stand of arms such as soldiers use; and, as you look upon the long ranges of polished musket barrels you will realize the sentiment if you do not recall the words of Longfellow's lines.

“This is the Arsenal—From floor to ceiling,
Like a huge organ, rise the burnished arms;
But from their silent pipes no anthem pealing
Startles the villages with strange alarms.

Ah! what a sound will rise, how wild and dreary
When the death-angel touches the swift keys!
What loud lament and dismal Miserere
Will mingle with their awful symphonies!

Little did the poet dream that this picture of his fancy would so soon be realized. Probably he thought, as have hundreds of others before and since, while visiting the arsenals at Springfield and Harper's Ferry, that there could hardly be any use in such constant forging of implements of war in this civilized land.

“ Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals and forts.”

Besides the evidences that war is really upon us which are presented in the active preparation of “ material ” in all the workshops, and on the grounds, the subject is forced upon you, as you stand on the southern wharf, and look across the placid water upon the green hills of Virginia and Maryland.

Immediately across the Eastern Branch you see the long, zig-zag, and not unpicturesque edifice of the Lunatic Asylum, and on the hills behind it, from right to left are some ten forts,* which appear to guard every prominent point. It was over there that the Ellsworth Zouaves were encamped before they passed by boat to Alexandria, to lose their gallant but injudicious Colonel, in the tragedy of the Marshall House, which furnished for some time a martyr for the North and another for the South, until, unhappily, the number of martyrs became too numerous to retain the distinction of any one individual very prominently before the public.

That Lunatic Asylum is an interesting place

* Forts Greble, Carrol, Snyder, Stanton, Wagner, Baker, Davis, Carton, Dupont and Mahan.

to visit; not only because of the wild men within, presenting the usual melancholy variety of cases, especially those caused by political excitement; but because it is also the receptacle of the wild animals sent to the Smithsonian. The view too of the City from this point is also one of the best.

But let us return—It was on these grounds that the Americans, during the war of 1812, before evacuating the place, deposited large quantities of ammunition in a dry well which the British soldiers accidentally exploded, while trying to destroy some cannon by firing one into the other. A large number lost their lives.

XXVIII.

THE BARRY CHAPEL.

THERE is a road leading from the Arsenal to the Navy Yard (a lettered street, probably *L* or *M South*) which I hope will one day be better than it was when I last traversed it. It is a short cut to the Navy Yard, and, on the left, you have the Capitol in sight most of the way with nothing to obstruct your view but now and then a brick kiln. On the right hand side the ground is more elevated in places, and on one of these, commanding a view of the

river, there formerly stood a little chapel and a tomb of which every vestige is now removed. While we are riding I will give you the story as it was told some years ago, in the New York *Knickerbocker*.

ADELE BARRON.

A NARRATIVE OF REMARKABLE OCCURRENCES IN REAL LIFE.

The custom of depositing the dead in tombs, however sanctioned by the precedent of Machpelah, has always appeared to me unnatural and inexpedient. There is a seeming attempt to make death comfortable, to enlarge the bounds of our last house, and evade, for a little time at least, the inevitable law of "dust to dust." In some countries it is necessary, as in Egypt, where the sandy soil exposes the corpse to the liability of disinterment by wild animals or the force of the winds, and where there seems to be, in the caverns and rocky hills, a sort of natural provision for the purpose; but where no such difficulty exists, the grave in a rural cemetery seems to present far more pleasing associations than the whitened sepulchre or the vault concealed from view by a grassy covering. Either of the last two presents to the mind the idea of a gloomy cellar, full of dead men's bones, or rows of dingy coffins bursting open with pes-

tiferous odors. The thought of decay is in itself bad enough ; but when that association is accompanied with the "horrible conceit of death and night" which belongs to the charnel house, "to whose foul mouth no wholesome air breathes in," we feel somewhat the same horror and dread which possessed Juliet at the thought of waking in such a place. How much more satisfactory the thought, that as the work of decomposition advances, the earth will close around and conceal forever from exposure, or at least from recognition, the remains of those we love, until at last, mingling with the dust around, they may nourish the turf and flowers which we plant above.

Nor is the tomb as secure from invasion as we are apt to suppose, especially in this country, where families so frequently change their residence to a point far distant from the burial place of their ancestors. We have seen doors rusted off from their hinges ; vaults which have caved in, in consequence of the sinking of the earth around, the crumbling of one or two imperfect keystones, or the loosening of perhaps a bad cement from the constant dampness occasioned by a heavy overgrowth of moss and creepers. Truthfully does the clown in Hamlet say, that the houses made by the grave maker last till doomsday !

I never shall forget the emotions with which I listened some time since to the details given by the sexton of one of our New York churches. He had visited the tenements of the dead at almost all hours and seasons, and seen corpses in almost every state of decomposition, and spoke of it all with as much professional coolness as does the gravedigger in Hamlet. Although to the philosopher it can matter but little what becomes of his useless and soon-to-be-forgotten dust, a thrill passes through every sensitive mind at the thought that a stranger may lift the coffin lid, and gaze upon the mouldering remains with that morbid curiosity which some people possess; and especially must this feeling prevail in a populous city.

Mr. Barron was an Irish gentleman, of a family of some distinction, who about the year 1788 removed to the United States, and, having settled in the city of New York, conducted an extensive commercial business with England and France.

His high character as a merchant and his superior attainments secured him the esteem and confidence of the public. No one entertained with more hospitality, or used wealth with more reference to the real refinements of life. New York was at that time the political as well as commercial metropolis of the Union, and under the

administration of WASHINGTON, with the eminent men in his cabinet and in Congress, there was more of the polish and gayety of a court than has been exhibited at any time since. In the circle of fashion, Mr. Barron's only daughter Adele, just blooming into womanhood, was the reigning belle; her exquisite beauty of person and sound good sense attracting the admiration of all the gentlemen, while her perfect simplicity of manners, unaffected modesty, and obliging disposition disarmed all envy on the part of her own sex. Two gentlemen had been universally regarded as rivals for her hand; the one an English gentleman, who had been acting as a diplomatic agent of his Government, the other a young merchant in New-York, and one of her father's partners; the former of whom we shall designate as Mr. Welden, the latter as Mr. Carleton. For a long time their attentions were unremitting, and it was considered doubtful which would secure the lady's preference. Carleton, by reason of kindred pursuits, as well as the fact that he would reside in this country, was thought to be more favored by the father and mother; while Welden, more polished and intellectual, was regarded as the lady's choice. Meanwhile, the two were constant visitors at the house, and, while Mr. Carleton was received with all the politeness due to a friend of her father's,

she strove to avoid in any way giving what might be construed into encouragement. But Carleton was not one to be rebuffed by trifles; and with that astonishing blindness to all ideas of dignity and self-respect which so often characterizes the passion of love, still cherished hopes, although it soon came to be known that the fair one had pledged her hand to his rival, and that he was about to return to England to attend to some family matters, and endeavor to complete arrangements for thereafter making the United States his home.

Mr. Barron had enjoyed the pleasure of a personal intercourse with Washington, during which he had become warmly interested in the President's favorite scheme for the establishment of a seat of government on the Potomac; and, in his contemplated retirement from active business, had thought of the future capital as a place for pleasant residence and society, and safe investment of his funds in city lots; the highest expectations having been at that time formed of the rapid rise of a magnificent city on the waste fields of Carrollsburgh and Ham-burgh. He had accordingly purchased, at considerable cost, a large tract, and put a part of it under cultivation; taking up his residence in Georgetown until his plans could be completed and a suitable residence built on the Capitol hill.

Himself and his family being Roman Catholics, and there being as yet no Catholic church there, he had commenced a small edifice for worship by himself, and the few of that persuasion who were then living in that part of the paper city.

The intelligence of his daughter's betrothal had been first generally whispered about at a grand ball given at Mr. Barron's house in New York a short time before Welden's departure, and within a month or two previous to the removal of the family to Georgetown. Adele never looked more lovely than when, arrayed in a simple dress of white, she stood by the side of her mother to receive the company. A group of companions and admirers formed around her, and ever and anon her cheeks were suffused with blushes as some one whispered congratulations into her ear. Similar expressions of approval were tendered to Major Welden, and by none more heartily than by Carleton, who seemed most anxious to conceal any mortification or envy of his rival which he might feel, by assuming a countenance of unwonted cheerfulness. "And so," said he, for want of other topics of conversation, "this gentleman is to meet you in the federal city on his return?"

"He will meet me in the chapel, then!" said Adele, jestingly; "for that is the only

house we are likely to have for some time to come."

"The very place of all others where he should prefer to meet you, provided the priest were present."

The compliment was gracefully acknowledged by Adele, who blushed at the literal construction put upon her words.

Welden sailed for England, and wrote a letter announcing his arrival, but stated that he should be detained longer than he had supposed, in consequence of unexpected difficulties relative to his property, and affliction in his family. It was full of the most endearing expressions and avowals of his earnest desire to hasten the period of his return. But now a long silence ensued. Letters in those days were much longer in crossing the water than at present, but there were two or three arrivals without any missive for Adele. The silence was of course soon construed into neglect, and the most unpleasant surmises arose. He had formed new associations, which had driven her from his mind; he had other society, and opposition from his family. These and a thousand other similar conjectures found much to support them in this ominous silence, and her parents began to think that their daughter had been made the victim of a cold-hearted trifler. Carleton shook his head, and intimated that he

had always suspected the diplomat of being fickle-minded, and seemed to derive a satisfaction from the consideration that Miss Adele would now know who was to be appreciated. But little attention did she pay to any of these surmises concerning the far-off one, for whom she tried to imagine all sorts of excuses. Her wounded spirit found no relief, save in her own bosom, which alternately swayed with hope and despondency in the agitation of conflicting conjectures.

The family soon removed to Georgetown, and the change seemed to be grateful to Adele's feelings, as she was no longer disturbed by the reflection that all around her were commenting on the treatment she had received. She rode over daily, and watched the progress of the chapel, superintended the setting out of trees around it, and planned improvements on the ground, finding in this employment a diversion from her anxiety of mind.

But another and more serious cause of apprehension awaited her, and had already been observed by her parents. They had several years before lost a daughter by consumption; and the unnatural flush which had for some time appeared on Adele's cheek could not be mistaken; especially when accompanied by a short, hacking cough. They had hoped that the air

of the Potomac might be more congenial to her health; but were soon satisfied that if any good was to be derived from a milder climate, she must go still farther south. No time was lost, but as Mr. Barron's engagements detained him, the eldest son acted as an escort to his mother and sister, and the three embarked at New York, and, after a rapid and pleasant voyage, arrived at the Havana. As usual in such cases, her health seemed at first to improve, and the most sanguine expectations of her recovery were indulged in by her fond parents.

They had been accompanied to the vessel by a crowd of friends, and Adele had leaned upon the arm of Carleton. As her father's friend and partner, she could not do otherwise than treat him with that civility which she would bestow on any friend of the family. The world, however, settled the matter in the usual off-hand way, and it was generally believed that, should Adele recover, she would become Mrs. Carleton.

While these things were going on in the United States, Welden, whose silence had occasioned such deep anxiety, was himself no less perplexed and annoyed at receiving no tidings from his betrothed. With the exception of two letters, in the last of which she gently rebuked him for not writing, and expressed herself

throughout in the cautious terms of one who distrusted the feelings of him she addressed, he had received no tidings from her. As he had regularly written by every vessel which took its departure, this intimation filled him with the most intense anxiety and suspense. He immediately wrote a long letter stating the facts, renewing his expressions of affection, and announcing that, although he had not yet accomplished his object, it was his intention to sail for the United States by a trusty English ship which was to leave in a few weeks. This letter he directed to Georgetown, to which place she had stated that the family were about to remove. No allusion had been made in her letter to her ill health.

In pursuance of his determination, he embarked about a month after the letter had been forwarded. For a time the ship made rapid progress, but about midway on her course was detained for nearly a week by a succession of calms. At length a northerly breeze set in, when she was espied and chased by a French frigate. The pursuit was long and the danger imminent, when a violent storm separated them, but not without inflicting severe damage on the English vessel. She had been driven far out of her course, and the captain found it necessary to put into the nearest port for repairs. This

chanced to be Matanzas, on arriving at which port, it was found that the ship had sustained much greater injury than was at first supposed, and that it would be necessary to remain there a week or two. Impatient at the delay, Welden inquired for some other more speedy conveyance to the United States, and learned that a schooner from the Havana had just arrived, having touched at this port to take in some additional freight, before sailing for Alexandria.

He went down to look at her accommodations, and to secure a passage. All was bustle on board, and the deck was covered with boxes and barrels, some of which had been taken from the hold in order to lower some hogsheads and other heavier articles to the bottom of the vessel. The master of the schooner was engaged in superintending these operations, and Welden, while waiting an opportunity to speak to him, seated himself on a box, and watched with a careless air the descent of the last hogshead into the hold. Being soon obliged to remove, by the approach of the crew toward the box upon which he was seated, he observed for the first time that it was a long and narrow chest, rather neatly made, with the letters 'A. B.' marked on the top, and enclosed in deep black lines. He also remarked that the crew conducted this proceeding in comparative silence, not accom-

panying their work with the "Yo-heave-ho!" which had beguiled their previous pulls upon the block and tackle. The rope slipped through their hands somewhat suddenly toward the last, causing the chest to come down with a sudden impetus. When it was stowed away, the captain exclaimed to himself:

"Thank heaven that it is over, and they know nothing about it!"

As the captain looked up, he for the first time noticed Welden, and explained that he thought some of his passengers might be annoyed if they found that the box was removed, though no harm could be done. Absorbed in his own business, Welden did not care to inquire further, although the coincidence between the initials and the name which was uppermost in his thoughts struck him for the moment as a little singular. He had soon secured a berth for the voyage, and went back to the ship to send his luggage on board, being informed that the other passengers, who had gone ashore, were to be on board that afternoon, when the vessel was to take advantage of the first fair wind. As he entered the cabin, on his return, he was surprised at hearing a lady in deep mourning utter his name with a start. It was Mrs. Barron, who, with her son, came forward to meet him, with tears in her eyes. No words were needed

to tell the tale. These signs of grief, coupled with the initials on the long and narrow chest, the silence of the sailors, and the remark of the captain, indicated too plainly that he had been seated upon the coffin which enclosed the remains of Adele Barron. Overcome with emotions which choked free utterance, he sank upon a settee, with pallid cheek and glazed eyes, and was at length only enabled to gasp out in broken sentences :

“How did it happen? When? Where?”

There is no disease more deceptive than consumption. The appearances which to the patient and friends give the most cheering assurances of recovery, too often immediately precede a rapid decline. So it was with Adele. The favorable indications which the few first weeks of residence in a warm climate had produced, rapidly changed, and the fond mother soon found herself watching by the side of her dying daughter's bed, listening to every pulsation, and endeavoring to cheer her by the consolations of religion. She was prepared for the change, for the last few months had been fruitful in reflections, and death had been from the first looked upon by her as an event which could not probably be deferred for a very long time. As she lay panting for breath, her head supported on a pillow, and now and then lisping

out a word of consolation to her mother, who stood by the bedside ministering to every want, the brother entered, bringing letters from home, which had just been brought by a vessel from the United States. One of them enclosed the letter which Welden had written just before leaving England. It was read by Mrs. Barron aloud. The eyes of the patient kindled with unwonted lustre, a sweet smile lighted up her face, and a moment after the spirit passed to the God who gave it. That smile remained upon the still beautiful though emaciated features, and the disconsolate mother pressed the lifeless clay with almost frantic grief.

“Such an object must not be buried,” she said. “No, it must be carried home, and placed in that chapel where she so loved to walk and pray, and where the requiems can be daily sung over her remains.”

The body was placed in a metallic coffin, which was filled with spirit, and carried on board the same vessel which had brought the letters, where, by the singular chance I have related, another mourner joined them.

It were needless to dwell upon the details of that solemn voyage. How much they talked of the dear departed one; of all she said, all her sufferings, her calmness in the prospect of death, the confidence she still retained in her

absent lover, so strikingly and happily confirmed toward the last ! How keen the agony Welden felt ! how he upbraided himself for not having sooner returned to solve the mystery, and free her mind from anxiety ; and how at times, as he lay in his berth, the reflection that but a few feet and an inch or two of plank separated him from her corpse within its narrow case, goaded him almost to madness ; all this can only be realized by those who have lost a loved friend, and felt the pangs of self-reproach for real or supposed neglect.

At length they arrived at their destination ; and the intelligence they brought came like a thunderbolt upon the family, who were entirely unprepared, from any previous accounts, to expect such a result. After the first startled exclamations, Mr. Barron gave vent to no violent emotions, but an occasional sigh told that, under that calm and apparently unruffled brow, there was a constant struggle between the feelings of a father and the duty of submission to the will of Providence. And it required all the calmness he could muster to cheer up his helpmate, whose feelings, heretofore in some measure subdued by the sense of responsibility and necessity for exertion, now broke forth in the most heart-rending despondency, as she stood once more in her own household and

saw everywhere the evidence of her bereavement vividly before her. The vacant room, the garments, the jewelry which had belonged to her daughter, all reminded her, with redoubled force, of the treasure she had lost; and at intervals a perfect paroxysm of anguish would come on, during which the voice of no comforter could be heard.

How empty indeed at such times are all the consolations which friends or spiritual advisers can offer! All seem but hackneyed phrases, applications which play around the wounded spirit, but do not reach the stricken heart. The idea that we shall no more see the departed is all predominant, and it is not until the gush of tears or the cares of life come to our relief that we can listen to the reflection that the loved one has only gone before, yielding to the common lot of humanity, and that we can rest upon the promise of meeting in another world. Little did the presence of Welden tend to allay this state of feeling in the mother. Ever since the day on which the high anticipations of his heart had been so suddenly blighted, he had maintained a settled melancholy, which no object seemed to divert. Mingled with this state of mind was a vague desire to solve the mystery relative to his letters, and thus fully vindicate himself before the relatives of his betrothed.

He said but little to any one, and frequently sought the retirement of his room, yet readily gave himself up to the guidance of those around him, as if bewildered in mind and unconscious of the world without.

Such indeed was the state of Mrs. Barron that for the two days succeeding her arrival the most serious apprehensions were entertained; and the family for the time, in their anxiety for the living, seemed to neglect the dead. Each morning, however, the father and the sons attended the service of the mass in the little chapel, where was placed the coffin, taken from its case, surrounded by wax candles, and strewn with flowers, which had been laid thereon by the youthful friends who guarded it by night and by day. Welden, too, was there, though not a Catholic in faith, and the neighbors present all shook their heads as they observed his air of listless indifference, with the saddened cast of his countenance, during the solemn service.

On the third evening Mrs. Barron for the first time desired to visit the chapel and look upon her daughter's face. The son had before proposed to open the coffin, but his father had shrunk from exposing to view the changed features of the once beautiful Adele, desiring that she should be remembered as she was

rather than as she now appeared. When, however, the mother expressed her wishes, and Welden too desired to look into the shrine, preparations were instantly made to gratify their wishes. The carriage which conveyed them arrived at the chapel before the person sent to open the outer or mahogany coffin had accomplished his task. A dimly burning lamp was suspended from the ceiling, in front of the altar, and the candles around the coffin reflected a peculiarly solemn glare on the faces of the mourners who stood grouped about, as the sexton unscrewed the fastenings one after another and lifted off the lid, which was made in the raised form in use at the South, and required to be entirely removed. When this was accomplished, a strong smell of spirits filled the chapel, and it was observed that the glass in the metal coffin over the face was broken, a fragment having fallen in upon the corpse. Welden's mind at once reverted to the fall on board the vessel as the cause of this, and he vented a curse upon the captain, at the same time springing forward and thrusting his hand in to take out the glass, with such violence as to badly wound his fingers.

The suddenness of this movement, and the utterance of language so unsuitable to the time and place, caused all to start with surprise,

being ignorant of its meaning ; for he had never mentioned to any one the scene he had witnessed on the schooner. Even the mother, all intent as she was on the object which had brought her to the chapel, recoiled for a moment, and turned upon him a look full of expressive inquiry. This and the blood on his hand seemed to bring him to a consciousness of the impropriety of his conduct. A tear started in his eye, and taking Mrs. Barron by the hand, he bade her come and look upon her daughter ; and gently leading her forward, the two together bent over the head of the coffin, toward which the eyes of all present were now turned with that grave yet curious expression which is generally to be seen on such occasions. There it lay, in its " narrow house," the dark sides of which, together with the sombre hue imparted by the liquid shroud, gave it a darkened aspect, and made it difficult with the dim candle-light to trace the features. There it lay, a dim outline, gradually becoming more and more distinct to the intense gaze of the lookers-on, and revealing the same placid features and the same sweet smile as when the mother had prepared it for the grave three weeks before. The effect upon her was such as the physician had anticipated ; she became perfectly calm and rational ; and although she wept freely, she seemed to derive

comfort and consolation from looking upon the features of her daughter. She called the attention of her husband and sons to the expression, remarking how natural it looked, and asked the priest if it could be possible that the spirit which had passed from a frame so composed as that before them could have been otherwise than prepared for the last great change:

Not so with Welden. The sight for the first time of that object which in life he had held so dear seemed to awaken those very emotions which in the mother it had subdued. His habitual composure had already been ruffled by the sight of the broken glass, but had been resumed for the moment from consciousness of the indecorum of his conduct and apprehensions of its consequences upon others; and now, as he gazed on the inanimate features before him and listened abstractedly to the comments of Mrs. Barron, he again lost his presence of mind, and addressed himself to the dead somewhat in the following strain:

“Oh, Adele! Adele! Shall I never see those eyes beam on me again? Shall those lips never lisp forgiveness to him who so thoughtlessly deserted you? No, no! I did *not* desert you! It was *not* I, but another—a false friend! I’ll call upon him by all the love he professed for you, and your spirit shall rise up

to torture his conscience until he admits that it was he!"

At this instant the door of the chapel was opened, and in walked Carleton, in a traveller's dress, covered with dust, much agitated, and with a bewildered expression. As he caught sight of the coffin he came to a stand, turned deadly pale, and, looking round upon the group for explanation, exclaimed:

"For God's sake, what's the matter?"

Welden pointed toward the coffin: "See there," said he, "there! *there!* **THERE** is my bride! *You* loved her likewise; there she lies; look upon her! She's dead—smiling in death!" Then, as if suddenly recalling something to mind, he relaxed his hold, and advancing toward Carleton, said, in a low tone:

"Do you remember when last she smiled? *I* remember it. Yes; it was when she said she should meet me in the chapel! Yes, that was the last time we saw her smile; and how she blushed when you told her that the chapel would be the best place, provided the priest was there! Ha! ha! ha! She would meet me in the chapel, she said, and here we are; and here's the *priest!*—and you, *you* have come to the wedding! Come—come up and salute the bride! She was in her ball dress then; she's in her *wedding dress* now!"

As he uttered these words with fixed eye and bitter irony, and motioned Carleton toward the ghastly features of the dead, the latter heaved a deep sigh, walked up and down two or three times in a distracted vein, pressed one hand convulsively against the breast pocket of his coat, and then suddenly exclaiming, "May God forgive me!" started for the door, where he was intercepted by Mrs. Barron, who demanded in the most earnest manner what he imported by those words. He made several evasive replies, ever and anon carrying his hand to the coat pocket, as if to see that its contents were secure. While Mr. and Mrs. Barron and the priest were endeavoring by persuasion and entreaty to prevail upon him to discharge his conscience of any load there might be upon it, Welden, who had been silently watching his movements, suddenly walked rapidly forward, seized Carleton's wrist with one hand, and tearing off the fastenings of the pocket with the other, pulled out a packet of letters, which he had no sooner glanced at than he threw them on the coffin. It was the work of an instant. Carleton at first tried to snatch them, and failing in this, turned and left the chapel.

They were the missing letters of Welden and Adele, bearing marks of having been long

carried about in the pocket from which they were taken ; but the seals were not broken.

The whole party were stupefied by this astounding discovery, with the exception of Welden, from whose mind it seemed to lift a weight. There was no longer, he felt, any room for even the vague suspicion which had, he fancied, at times crossed the mother's mind that her daughter had been trifled with by him ; he was free from any charge of carelessness in despatching the letters, with which he had been disposed occasionally to reproach himself. From the fact that his letters were directed to the care of the firm in New York, and from certain remarks which the active partner had on one or two occasions made to the brother who had escorted Mrs. Barron to the West Indies, as well as from that partner's extremely jealous disposition, the suspicion had arisen that he was in some way associated with the mysterious disappearance of those letters, and he had been planning in his own mind a way of discovery, which had now occurred, to his great relief.

It was only at the earnest entreaties of the good priest that they could be prevailed on to put an end to this interview between the living and the dead, and return to their home.

On the next morning the last rites for the dead were performed with all the pomp and

ceremonies of the church, in the presence of a crowded assembly of mourners. A single female voice sung a dirge to the accompaniment of a small organ; clouds of incense rose above the altar; and, in their implicit faith, the bereaved parents seemed to be comforted with the thought that the prayers for the dead which the priest repeated were already answered.

"Such," said the good priest, who described this scene to me, "is the consolation to be derived from the doctrines of our church."

Many a silent tear stole down the cheeks of the lookers-on when the coffin was passed into the sepulchre below, through an opening in the floor, and the trap door was closed.

Soon after the mourners had returned, a letter was handed to Mr. Barron. It was from Carleton, and had been handed by him to the keeper of the hotel in Georgetown, with a request that it might be delivered in the afternoon of that day, Carleton himself having left the house about twelve o'clock on the preceding night with his portmanteau in his hand, without stating where he was going. In the letter was found sundry papers relating to the affairs of the firm in New York, which had been suddenly plunged in great embarrassment by the disastrous consequences of the revolution in Europe. It appeared that this was the cause

of his sudden visit to Georgetown, and that he had not heard of the recent arrival, or of the death of Adele when he descended from the stage on the previous evening. He had hurried to the house with the view of seeing Mr. Barron on business, and was informed by the servant that the family had just departed for the chapel, but without mentioning the cause. Supposing it to be some festival or service of the church, he mounted a horse and rode over, intending to accompany them back. As he put his hand on the knob of the chapel door, he was startled at hearing the voice of Welden addressing mysterious language to Adele. He hesitated whether to intrude upon what seemed to be a private scene, when the last words of Welden led him to suppose that he had been observed through the chapel window; and he entered, determined to brave the man he hated, but was driven from the resolution by the spectacle which presented itself. Overwhelmed with the weight of a guilty conscience, as he stood in the presence of all that remained of one upon whom he had inflicted so much pain, and whose death he feared his conduct had hastened, he thoughtlessly pressed his hand upon the place where the evidence of his guilt was concealed, and thereby attracted the attention of Welden, as has been related.

Some of these particulars were stated and others inferred from the letter, in which he acknowledged his guilt, but excused himself on the ground of his excessive attachment to Adele, and the impression that Welden's object was chiefly to secure her fortune; that consequently Adele's happiness would be promoted by breaking off the match by any means, however unlawful. He had not, however, intended to destroy the letters; nor had he ever opened them; but he had proposed, in case Adele did not soon forget the absent one, and listen to his own addresses, to let the letters be delivered by some means, and have their delay attributed to accident. The letter ended with the exclamation:

‘Oh, my God! who could have thought it would have ended so!’

On inquiry, it was afterward found that a person answering to Carleton's description had taken passage in the early morning stage from Washington to Baltimore, but by another name. He did not appear again in New York, and no farther trace of him could be found. The watchers at the chapel reported that they had heard footsteps outside the chapel at a very early hour in the morning, and one of them had seen a face look in at the window; but on going to the door they heard footsteps as of some one

rapidly retreating, and saw no more. Various rumors were afloat concerning suicide or concealment in the neighborhood of the chapel, and frequent visits to the vault by a false key at night; but the most probable supposition was, that under a sense of disgrace he had gone abroad under an assumed name.

The state of Mr. Barron's affairs in New York was found to be even worse than was supposed; and the business was soon wound up with the absorption of a large portion of his floating capital to pay his debts. There still remained to him his investments at Washington, many of which were unfortunately made in the lots near the chapel, which remain to this day what they were then.

For years afterward he struggled with all manner of difficulties; both in family and fortune. Consumption soon laid his wife by the side of her daughter, the same disease carried off one after another, so that when, some fifteen years later, he himself was carried to his long home, he left but one surviving son out of his large family.

Welden remained some years attached to the English legation, and was frequently seen riding alone toward that isolated white building. He mingled little in society, and finally returned to England, where he died.

I had often when a boy seen the only surviving son, and heard him allude to the chapel with all that reverence due to a family burial place, expressing his determination to keep it in order as long as he lived. But he too was a consumptive and was spared but a short time. Some years since, in company with a venerable parent, I visited the chapel for the first time. The weeds and thorns had grown up around it, the glass of the windows was broken, the door had rusted from its hinges, and desolation reigned everywhere. The interior was pretty well preserved, but the trap door had been removed, probably by some curious or vicious intruders, and a crazy pair of steps remained leading down to the tomb. Descending for a few steps, we could see that the inner door was gone. Some coffins still remained, but the fragments of others, and what appeared to be bones, were strewn over the pavement or floating in water which had penetrated during a recent storm. A long metallic strip, which appeared to be part of a coffin, lay immediately below the steps amidst clods of greasy-looking clay; all indicated the desolate and forgotten burial place, the habitation only of bats and creeping things.

We learned that the last heir had left no relative residing in the neighborhood. His executors not knowing of this burial place, had

interred him elsewhere, and as this lot was at a point which few ever visited, even by chance, and where property was valued at almost nothing, no attention had ever been given to the proper care of the building by the distant owner, and it had been suffered to go to decay, the very existence of such a place, much less its history, being known to few of the residents of a city proverbial for the transitory character of its population. The few who did know of it, could only give faint recollections of the family, coupled with a vague impression that there was some sad story connected with the tenant of one of the coffins who had been and still was preserved in spirits. This in itself was enough to excite the imagination of the ignorant; and it was supposed might have led some over-curious ones to break into the building with the view of testing its truth, and thus exposed the tomb to the elements.

Attention was soon called to the subject, and a procession of the priesthood soon after visited the chapel, and with due solemnity transferred the remains from the frail tenement of a tomb to that strongest of houses, the grave. In that procession was a venerable man who recalled the period when, forty years before, he had officiated at that now deserted altar, and committed the remains then inclosed in that metal

coffin to what was supposed to be their last resting place. And then he told over the scene he had witnessed there the night before the funeral ; and by putting his accounts with those I had previously heard, I have sketched this history of what may be called a fated family. It is not pleasant to dwell upon such scenes ; but it is sometimes useful to reflect upon them, and find in them a lesson on the frailty of life, its joy and sorrows.

XXIX.

THE NAVY YARD.

ALL navy yards appear much alike—great shipyards, shiphouses and docks, blacksmith shops and timber depots, officers' quarters and storehouses, affording little opportunity for much variety of design. At the Washington yard much of the heavy iron work of the Navy is executed, and it is more exclusively a manufacturing establishment than the others ; although many frigates and smaller craft have been built there. The propriety or necessity of a Yard so far inland was formerly much questioned ; but it has now become a very important auxiliary for the repair of vessels ; and, after the rebels seized the one at Norfolk it be-

came indispensable to the Potomac flotilla or fleet. Here is a forge for making the largest anchors, and no one can help lingering by the open door to see the large mass of red-hot metal subject to the pounding of enormous hammers wielded by athletic arms. As, at the Arsenal, one sees all the inventions for fighting on land, so here you have in the Armory a complete assortment of the numerous contrivances for shooting and slashing at sea, nearly all made here. The Arsenal and Navy Yard are, in fact, the spots selected for nearly all experiments with new inventions. There is a neatness and finish about the whole aspect of the place which makes it quite attractive. Of course there are here, as at the Arsenal, cannon of brass and iron; trophies from various quarters. Formerly these surrounded a very pretty monument by Italian artists erected by naval officers to the bravery of Somers, Caldwell, Decatur, Dorsey, and Israel, noted names in the contest with Tripoli. It was removed to the Capitol and placed in the centre of the pool of water immediately in front of the western entrance, a strange position indeed, from which it was afterward appropriately transferred to the grounds of the Naval School at Annapolis. Now that the Naval School has left Annapolis, perhaps it will be started in some new journey.

It is to be hoped however that, when the war is over, the School will return to its old quarters. On your way home stop a moment at the Barracks, where, if it is music day, you will hear a fine band. Altogether, the Navy Yard, with its officers and marines, its sailors and ship workers everywhere active, is a very pleasant place to visit.

Perhaps it may interest some to know that this Yard was destroyed by the English on their capture of the City in 1814. They cannot be censured for breaking up all military and naval establishments which came in their way. The destruction of the Capitol and President's House was an entirely different matter, and has found no defenders even among themselves, except a writer in the United Service Journal, who thought it a just retaliation for the alleged destruction of certain Government buildings in Canada by our forces. If the fact be so, it does not justify the act.

XXX.

ABOUT THE BRITISH.

WITH the war now on our hands every one has quite as much as he can do to keep pace with events which are taking place before him,

without looking into the musty records of former wars.

The capture of Washington by the British has been put into history by Col. Williams, in a book especially relating thereto, and Mr. Charles J. Ingersoll, in his rambling book of scraps, called the history of the war of 1812, has given many amusing items of gossip, as well as some curious facts. A sufficiently correct summary of the leading facts is contained in Philips's Guide, which is probably quite as much as anybody would now care to read.

But we are tempted to give here the experience of two married ladies, as related by one of them, some years since, in reply to the request, "Tell us about the British, mother!" They lived on Eighth street, in two houses, which are still standing,* and were then among the best in the place.

"When the report came that the British were on their way, Mr. Vernon came home in the afternoon, and found an order directing him to repair to the Capitol the next morning to receive orders. At daybreak he went up, not expecting to be called out of the city, and making no preparation therefor. I heard nothing from him until night, when a black man came to get

* Nos. 146 and 148, between Market Space and D street.

some clothing, and stated that he had been appointed servant to Capt. Vernon, who wrote a note, saying that he was then near Bladensburg, but did not know where they were going. This was on Friday, and everybody was in great alarm. On Sunday all who could went away. On Monday all papers, pictures, &c., were removed from the public offices. On Wednesday, about three o'clock in the afternoon, I saw the American soldiers marching along the Avenue; but could not see my husband among them; and, toward night, we heard that the enemy had arrived. The first intimation I had was by the firing of guns; and, after dark, I saw the fires caused by the burning of the Sewell House, Carroll's row, and the Capitol, between which edifice and our house there were scarcely any buildings except Brown's old hotel.*

"I concluded that they were going to burn all the way down, and went to call Paul, an old black servant, who had promised to stay, but was not to be found. Kitty, his wife, had previously gone, so that I was without servants, with an infant in my arms, and felt very helpless and lonely. Mrs. Bender, my neighbor, whose husband had been also ordered off, came in, frightened almost out of her wits, with a

* Now the Metropolitan.

camphor bottle in one hand, and a handkerchief in the other.

“‘We’ll stay together,’ she said, ‘there’s but One Power can save us. What shall we do?’

“We lighted both houses, and I went in and sat with her. About nine o’clock the British came down opposite the Centre Market, then called the Marsh Market.

“Hinckley, a very intelligent man when sober, lived in the neighborhood, and had manifested a disposition to befriend us; but he came into the house now very drunk, and denouncing the enemy in no measured terms for what they had done. We got him to bed lest he should make trouble.

“Late in the day on Thursday we heard a clanking of horses, but the fog obscured our vision. We were seated in the parlor, determined, if the British came, to throw ourselves on their mercy and gallantry. Suddenly there was an exclamation outside, ‘Let’s have a pop at him,’ and the report of a gun, and immediately we heard a man dart through the passage of our house, and down the kitchen stairs.

“We were motionless from fright; Mrs. Bender gulped down camphor, and handed the bottle to me with expressive silence. We watched at the back window for some time,

afraid to move, and expecting every moment to see or hear some horrible sight or sound. The window was open. I ventured to look out—saw the cellar door slowly raised a little way, then, after a pause, a little higher, revealing the well-known sandy head of an old Irishman, who kept a drinking shop in a tenement next door.

“Lord, is it you, Moriarty!” I exclaimed. “You have frightened us terribly.”

“‘Indade, and it’s myself that was frightened; for I thought the British were at my heels, ma’am, and divil a bit did I think where I was a going.’

“He had been in the act of pumping water at the corner, and, hearing the exclamation, ‘Let’s have a pop at him,’ supposed he was the game they were after, and, dropping his stone pitcher, beat a retreat through our passage, as the nearest cover. The horsemen were in search of a man named Lewis, who had insulted them, and whom they shot in the discharge which followed Moriarty’s retreat. Lewis, after receiving the shot, galloped as far as F street, and then fell dead from his horse.

“Moriarty now became very valiant, and declared he would stay by us until death, and accordingly walked out to pick up some news, returning with the intelligence that the enemy

did not intend to burn any buildings but such as had Government stores. This would have relieved us in a measure from apprehension, but from the circumstance that the cellar contained a large number of muskets, hams, and other articles of provision, which had been brought to the house on Tuesday in a large wagon, the driver of which said that they were articles belonging to my husband's company, but not required. These, if discovered, would surely, we thought, expose our houses to destruction; so, after dark, we sent for the Irish women living in shanties on Seventh street (whose husbands had gone as soldiers), and distributed among them the provision, which was truly welcome, for some of them were really suffering: then, with the aid of one of the women and Moriarty, we carried the guns out into the cornfield, between our house and Gales & Seaton's office, concealing them under the potato vines.

"On Thursday afternoon, Hinckley, who was now perfectly sober, went out on the Avenue, where Admiral Cockburn and other officers were gathered in a group on horseback, and told him that these two houses were occupied by ladies, who were entirely alone. The Admiral was very civil, and said he hoped that his character had not been so much maligned as to lead any one to suppose that he would disturb unresist-

ing persons, and that orders had been issued to that effect.

“Still we felt uneasy, for half-drunken soldiers were constantly stepping around and coming to the door to beg. Moriarty got hold of all he could find, and dosed them with whiskey enough to render them harmless for the time being. In the course of the day a terrific storm came on, and soon after it subsided, the explosion at Greenleaf’s Point shook the whole city. Before we learned what it was, while anxiously looking out, I saw, from the back window, old Paul making his way through the corn toward the house, his black head only now and then visible, as the stalks were very high. Suddenly he pitched forward and disappeared entirely for a few seconds, when he arose, with a gun in his hand, and appeared to be somewhat bewildered. I called out to him.

“‘La’s-a-marcy, old missus, is dat you!—I’s e so glad—I t’out you’d done gone for sure when I falled over dis ere gun.’

“At this point he disappeared again, having a second time stumbled over one of the concealed muskets. On any other occasion I should have laughed at the figure he presented, when he reached the house and wondered “ef the war was gwine to get into the taters and corn,’ adding that it ‘’peared’ to him he

'could'nt go nowhar without hearing guns or seeing 'em.' But I was too much alarmed to enjoy his confusion, and made him quickly drop the gun, and hurry into the house, glad to have even such protection. We had learned from the driver of the camp wagon that my husband's company was with others near Tenallytown, above Georgetown; but what they were ordered there for no one could tell, nor has the fact ever been explained, any more than the quarter to which blame is to attach in relation to the retreat which was ordered at Bladensburg.

"Many of the British soldiers who drank with Moriarty were disposed to be very talkative, and stated that the army were anxious to get out of the city, fearing some Yankee trick, as they could hardly believe it possible that the place would be left so entirely undefended. We heard that some of the British officers took supper at the boarding house of Mrs. Suter, near the President's. She was surprised when one of the officers saluted her familiarly, and assured her that she need have no cause for alarm, when she recognized him as one who had some time previously boarded at her house under another name, in fact, a spy. They paid her handsomely for all they had. These and other stories were constantly brought to us by

Hinckley and Moriarty: while Paul was not slow in picking up a thousand frightful exaggerations which prevailed among the negroes. One of these was to the effect that the British were going to carry off all the colored people they could catch; and I think it was an apprehension of this kind which led the timid soul to return to the house, instead of the desire to protect us, as he asserted.

“After the explosion, with no reliable servants, and in constant fear and trembling, we determined, if possible, to get out of the city; and that night, escorted by Hinckley and old Paul, we went on foot to the farm of Dr. Bradley, being what now constitutes Glenwood Cemetery. The British, or a portion of them, were encamped near what is now the Douglass Row. We could see their camp fires, and stopped to rest, and watched their proceedings with considerable interest. Glad enough were we to meet a son of Dr. Bradley, at the entrance to his father’s farm, where we were cordially entertained until after the enemy had departed, when we returned to the city. A day or two after, my husband made his appearance, with beard almost an inch long, his white pants turned black with dirt, and himself completely worn out with fatigue. He said that they had been ordered to move without knowing for

what, and, as afterward appeared, in exactly the opposite direction from that where the enemy were to be found. Whether Gen. Winder, the Secretary of War Armstrong, or the President were most to blame, I do not know. The general opinion at the time was, that the commanders were more to be censured than the troops, although the retreat has always been described as the 'Bladensburg races.' " *

* A word or two about Bladensburg may be interesting; and we cannot give a better account than that furnished by Mr. Kennedy in his "Life of William Wirt," of whom it was the birthplace.

"Previous to the Revolutionary War this village, on the Eastern Branch, was a thrifty, business-driving, little seaport, profitably devoted to the tobacco trade, of which it constituted at that day quite an important mart. It was inhabited by some wealthy factors, whose mode of living, both in the character of their dwellings and in the matter of personal display, communicated a certain show of opulence to the town. But the place has been for many years past a drowsy and stagnant little village, well known by its position on the wayside of a great thoroughfare to the national metropolis, from which it is but a few miles distant. It is somewhat famous in our annals, not only as a neutral ground where many a personal combat has decided what the world has chosen to call a point of honor, but also as the field where higher questions were put to mortal arbitrament, when the British army, in 1814, disputed with an American host for the possession of the Capital. From a date before the commencement of the present century,—the village has been falling gradually away under the touch of time. During a great portion of this period, it was enlivened by the daily transit of some half dozen or more mail coaches, plying to and

XXXI.

THE ARMY ASYLUM.

THERE is no more delightful drive on a summer evening than that to the "Soldier's Home," as it is usually called. You may go out by that favorite drive, the Fourteenth street road, or by New York avenue and Glenwood Cemetery.

To Gen. Winfield Scott the public is mainly indebted for this Chelsea of America. The position is admirable, commanding a view of the city and river for miles. The marble buildings, too, are tasteful and imposing. One of them—that appropriated to the surgeon—has for some years past, by some arrangement between its occupant and the President, become the summer residence of the latter.

It is to be hoped that, in time, some appropriate memento of the hero of Lundy's Lane

from the Capital of the United States. Twice a day the silence which brooded over its streets was broken by the blowing of horns, the clamor of stable boys hurrying with fresh relays of horses to the doors of rival stage houses, and by the rattle of rapidly arriving and departing coaches. But even these transient glories have vanished. The railroad, which touches only on the border of the village, has now displaced the old stage-coach, and the village slumbers are no longer broken.

and of Mexico, a statue or a column, will be erected here, as well for his devotion to the Union, when so many of his family and friends took the side of the South—as for his past services.

The present inmates are soldiers from the War of 1812, and the Mexican contest. They are many of them very intelligent men, and can spin long yarns for you. Probably many an addition will be required to this Asylum for the army of invalids who may survive the present war. The elegant grounds of W. W. Corcoran, Esq., immediately adjoining, would furnish all that could be desired, if they can be secured. Government has been using them for hospital purposes to their very serious damage.

We are inclined to pay here a tribute of respect to this gentleman, who is one of the few who know how to dispose of wealth after it is acquired. Witness his gallery of paintings, which was always open to the public in peaceful times, and the spacious edifice opposite to the War Department, intended to be dedicated to Art, but now devoted by the exigencies of the war to the purposes of an army depot. The Cemetery at Georgetown, too, was mainly founded by him.

To return to the Asylum. Many of the States have been providing in various ways for

disabled soldiers. What better plan could they adopt than to furnish their contribution for the support of this excellent national establishment?

In the rear of the Asylum, on the other side of the road, may be seen a series of regular furrows, formed by the graves of soldiers who have died in the various hospitals. Small wooden head-boards record who they were. Alas! such cemeteries are to be seen everywhere on the scenes of the war.

XXXII.

GEORGETOWN.

FROM the Army Asylum a pleasant drive brings one to the heights of Georgetown, decidedly the most beautiful part of the district, with many grand residences erected by the former merchants of that ancient burgh, with trees and shrubbery comparing well with what you see in Springfield, Northampton, New Haven, and other rural towns of the north. Following the heights until a turn to the right, after passing the Reservoir, you come, after a drive of a couple of miles, to *Tenallytown* and Fort Stevens, from which a rather pleasant view of the valley is to be obtained. If, instead of taking the right, you turn to the left, a short drive

brings you to the *Convent of the Visitation* and the *Georgetown College*, the largest Jesuit College in the country, where the fathers are very courteous in showing you their fine library and museum. From the Infirmary you see the narrow bed of the Potomac and the course of the river, with the southern part of the city. Underneath you look down on the Canal, by the side of which a ride of about three miles brings you to the *Chain Bridge*, so called, we suppose, because there is no chain about it, though perhaps there was once. This is directly over the "Little Falls," where the scenery is quite picturesque.

THE AQUEDUCT.

Near the "Chain Bridge" is the fifty-acre Receiving Reservoir of the Aqueduct, concerning which we may as well say a word here.

When the site of Washington was selected, the springs were numerous and the water excellent; and unusual regulations were adopted against sinks of all descriptions in order to preserve the purity of the wells, so that the pump water is still good in all parts of the city. But the engineers at that time made careful examinations as to the sources from which a greater supply could be obtained when needed. Mr.

Andrew Ellicott reported in favor of either Rock Creek or the Great Falls of the Potomac, giving his preference to the latter. More complete surveys were made in 1851 and 1855 by Lieut. Col. Hughes and Lieut. (now General) Meigs, and they concurred in the opinions expressed by Ellicott. He reported in favor of the Great Falls, distant some eighteen miles, in preference to either Rock creek or Little Falls, both much nearer, but not furnishing as great and reliable a supply, and the latter requiring machinery to raise the water.

The Great Falls are one hundred and eight feet higher than tide water.* They will furnish a constant and everlasting daily supply of over thirty-six millions of gallons,—which is nine millions more than the Croton aqueduct supplies to New York, twenty-one millions more than Philadelphia receives from the Schuylkill, and twenty-six millions more than Boston obtains from the Cochituate. The water from the Great Falls was admitted in Dec. 1863, but

* The following are given by Col. Hughes as the levels of some of the more prominent points within the city, above ordinary low tide:

Foundation of St. John's Church,	65.50
Corner of I and Thirteenth streets, west, . .	82.10
Base of Observatory,	96.20
Eastern base of Capitol,	89.50
Corner of N and Eleventh streets, west, . .	103.70

the city was supplied for a year or two previous with three millions a day, from a small stream called the Powder Mill Branch. The work has frequently been suspended by the irregular appropriations, which have increased the cost thus far to something like a million more than the estimate of Gen. Meigs, which was about \$2,000,000, based however upon the proviso that it should be steadily and vigorously prosecuted, of which, from past experience of Congressional action, he might well have entertained doubts. The advantages are summed up as follows :

Simplicity and durability ; perfect security and inexhaustible and unfailing source ; lavish use, which can be indulged in in consequence of abundant supply ; power of street washing, cooling the air, and embellishing the city by great fountains ; use for driving small machines, lathes, printing presses, and the like ; great space for settling and purifying in reservoirs, and great quantity in store for emergencies : small expense of keeping up the works when once established, and consequent low price of water delivered in houses or factories.

Any one familiar with the immense area of the city streets, adapted more to national pride than to the means of any tax payers of any place, and the large proportion of the water re-

quired for the public buildings and grounds, will see a reason why this had to become a Government work. The income from the water will no doubt in time repay to the Government such part of the cost as is properly chargeable to the city.

There are eleven tunnels, some of them many hundred feet long, and six bridges, one of which, crossing the Cabin John creek, is constructed of a single arch two hundred and twenty feet in span (as long as Bunker Hill monument is high) and one hundred feet high. A Distributing Reservoir, for Georgetown, was passed as we drove along the Heights.

In returning from this drive, or rather series of drives, you pass through the principal street of Georgetown, laid out in 1751, now a city, with a population of about eight thousand. It is, in fact, a part of Washington, as Brooklyn is of New York, being only separated by Rock creek, which is crossed on a bridge, the arches of which are formed by the aqueduct pipes. A little above is another bridge, on the site where one was formerly constructed of refuse materials from public buildings. The names of the original thirteen States were engraved upon the arch, that of Pennsylvania was on the keystone. Hence the name, "Keystone State."

We are now back in Washington, and the first thing we encounter is Mills's statue of its founder, in "The Circle," as the inclosure is called. Pity, for its effect on approach, that the statue had not been so placed as to present a side view.

On this spot, in 1860, President Buchanan, with Vice-President Breckinridge, Senator Hammond of South Carolina, and other distinguished Southerners around him, as the statue was about to be unveiled, expressed the hope that this Union might ever continue, with this city for its capital ; and all gave a shout of concurrence. Probably the Southerners were sincere,—with the proviso understood that they were to be the rulers.

This statue, and that of Jackson, opposite the President's, have been severely criticised. They may not compare well with works in Europe, but are very creditable to a self-taught artist,—much more than is the Webster statue by the celebrated Powers, in Boston.

Of course you will wish at some time to visit the *Observatory*, where a fine view of the surrounding country, and an opportunity to inspect many beautiful instruments, is to be had in the day time, and a look through the telescope sometimes at night. Here, too, at this time, "the Corral" is to be seen by those interested in the ex-

tempore management of large numbers of army horses. When this is removed, the Observatory square will probably be laid out as a more ornamental inclosure.

XXXIII.

ODDS AND ENDS.

PRESENTS.

EVERY visitor to the Patent Office has his attention called to the various treaties with foreign nations, the original declaration of independence, the commission of Washington, his camp chest, and other relics. There is also a variety of trinkets, swords, guns, &c., presented at different times to the President, to our ministers abroad, and to other officials, who are not allowed by law to receive gifts, and have consequently deposited them in the "Department of State," but which have been placed in the Patent Hall for the convenience of the public. Every nation has what is called its crown jewels, and these are the nearest approach of "Uncle Sam" to such a collection; though of late years Congress has so often given permission to officers to retain particular presents, that it is probable the collection will not be greatly

increased, except so far as the President of the United States is concerned. That dignitary will hardly ask for such a trivial benefit, especially as his name will be more publicly associated with them if preserved in the archives of State. When the new fireproof State Department is completed, there should be a suitable room for the exhibition of these mementos of our foreign intercourse, as well as of the treaties, great seal, &c. It hardly seems fitting to place these articles alongside of patent ploughshares and baby jumpers, although it may be said with some propriety that the real jewels of the nation are to be seen in the evidences which the Patent Office furnishes of the progress of its sons in mechanical science. Still, each Department has its peculiar associations, to which some regard should be had. The visitor to the Treasury will naturally expect to see everything which will illustrate our financial progress, and it is to be hoped that specimens may be collected there of all our coins, and paper currency, from Continental notes down. In the War Department, all the improvements of arms should be exhibited, either at the Department proper, or the Arsenal. The building known as the "Armory," on the Mall, was commenced with reference to the ultimate collection there of all our military trophies. So, in the Navy Department

or the Navy Yard, models of the most approved forms of shipbuilding and engineering are already to some extent collected, but are not arranged in a manner to admit of convenient inspection. As to the relics of Washington and other revolutionary heroes, the National monument, if ever completed, would be the proper depository—until then they might be placed in the old Representatives' Hall at the Capitol.

To return to the subject of presents—an amusing chapter might be made upon the disposition made of some articles which could not be very conveniently exhibited in a Public Hall. General Jackson and Mr. Van Buren were the recipients of Arabian Horses, Lions, and other live animals, which were sold, and the proceeds given to charitable institutions. If any more should come, they might be added to the small menagerie which the Smithsonian Institution and Dr. Nichols have collected at the "Lunatic Asylum," where, if they serve no other useful purpose they will at least divert the minds of the patients. A rich carpet presented to President Van Buren is kept rolled up in a glass case; it had much better be spread as a rug in the President's east room, if the moths have left it in a condition to be seen. A bottle of otto of rose, said to be of immense value, and demijohns

of rose water, are carefully preserved. Their sweetness can hardly be said to be "wasted on the desert air" for they are never, publicly at least, uncorked. There have been occasions, after an influx of the great unwashed crowd of office seekers, when a little of the perfume sprinkled about the Executive mansion would have been most desirable.

PICTURES.

A collection of portraits of Indian chiefs who at different times have visited the Capital, mostly painted by C. B. King, belong to the Indian Bureau, and are to be distinguished from those in the Smithsonian Gallery, which were painted by Stanley, but have not, that we are aware, been purchased by the Government. They should ornament the rooms of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, while the portraits of Guizot, and other eminent men might be placed in the Capitol or in the Smithsonian.

SCIENCE.

Among the Indian relics, minerals, &c., at the Smithsonian, are many marked with the name of the National Institution for the promotion of Science, which was incorporated by

Congress, and intended to occupy a position similar to the Society of Arts at Paris. For a time there was much interest taken in its proceedings, honorary members were elected, and a correspondence invited from all parts of the world; this action, together with the names of Government officers connected with it, elicited many replies from Europe; and the principal business at each meeting was the recital of the donations received. But the necessity of relying upon annual subscriptions, led to the election to the privileges of membership of all who would pay the annual fee, which lowered the value of the honor, although many of the most learned and scientific took an active part. The funds received were hardly sufficient to pay the freight on articles presented.

Mr. Woodbury and others advocated the plan of placing the Smithsonian bequest under the control of this Society, and two of the regents are required to be members of it, but we are not aware that any meetings have lately been held. The collections practically belong to the Government, that being their destination in case the Society is dissolved.

We may here mention that a learned society is embraced in the charter of the Smithsonian Institution, being the supervisory or visitorial board, composed of the ex-officio members not

in Congress, of the board of Regents, with the addition of the Commissioner of Patents, and such other persons as they may elect honorary members. Two or three meetings only of this board have been held, and a few honorary members chosen, but it has probably been found impracticable to accomplish much, from the constant official engagements of most of its members.

The Academy of Sciences recently incorporated by Congress is more effective, as the number of members is limited to fifty, and they are to be the medium of all scientific investigations required by the Departments, which is the only source apparently of income.

Another portion of the collections in the Smithsonian are marked as the results of the South Sea Exploring Expedition. It is not generally known that such of these as were new to the botanist or natural historian have been most exquisitely illustrated in the Report of the scientific corps of that Expedition, of which seven or eight volumes have been issued. Unfortunately, Congress only ordered one hundred copies to be printed; out of which the States and Foreign Governments have been supplied. Some of the remaining copies were destroyed at the burning of the Congress Library; the work is therefore very rare. The

plates have, we believe, been given to the Smithsonian.

The Coast Survey, south of the Capitol, is very interesting to any one who has a taste for geographical investigations, while the process of engraving the maps is in the highest style of art. Many a visitor, not of the nautical profession, will be astonished to find the positions in the neighborhood of his own residence laid down here with a degree of accuracy and minuteness not to be found on any local maps. It is only here and at the Smithsonian that one can retire for awhile from the political atmosphere; and it will be found a great relief to discover, among the votaries of science, those who search for truth, regardless of the convulsions without. But those who are prosecuting the surveys have, of course, been seriously interrupted by the war.

FLOWERS.

Allusion has been made in the article on the Patent Office to the conservatories in front of the Capitol, and it seems proper to say that the South Sea, Japan, and the Mexican Expeditions are all here represented in the most beautiful as well as useful plants.

Latterly Congress has shown a disposition

to foster and encourage this foundation for a "*Jardin des Plantes*," which has been under the supervision of the joint library committee. It is curious to see by what devices some of the most useful establishments have been placed upon a permanent footing; for example, when, many years ago, John Quincy Adams proposed that the Government should found a national observatory, the strict constructionists found no authority for it in the Constitution, and it was ridiculed by the ignorant as "a lighthouse in the skies." When finally established, it was under the name of "a depot for charts and instruments," there being no Constitutional objections to a place for the reception of such results of naval investigations. The regulation of chronometers followed as a matter of course, for which an astronomical clock and an observatory were very essential. So with regard to the conservatories.

Had it been proposed to directly establish a series of greenhouses for flowers, the Democracy in Congress would have been shocked at so purely ornamental and feminine an appendage to the public buildings; but it became necessary to preserve the collections of the expeditions which had cost many millions of money, in order that the works to which we have alluded might be prepared therefrom. Those works

were an addition to the Library, and hence the Library Committee became curator of a flower garden. To Admiral Wilkes the public are greatly indebted for these beautiful additions to the attractions of the Capitol.

So much for various objects which cannot fail to occupy more or less the attention of a man of leisure in Washington. Nothing has been said concerning private collections, as it is only the object of the writer to allude to those subjects which may be the foundations of permanent institutions or museums in the National Capitol.

XXXIV.

ALEXANDRIA.

At one time the space between the Chain Bridge and Alexandria was one series of grand encampments. This was in the long period which ensued after the first battle of Bull Run; and, though the ground is comparatively free of soldiers now, and consequently presents but little of the pomp and circumstance which formerly enlivened the road, still it is quite worth while to ride or drive to Alexandria, visiting Upton's Hill, the Fairfax Seminary, and other

points rendered memorable by the war. You can return by the boat if you desire some variety. Alexandria, like Georgetown, is a decayed town, and before the sutlers and the crowd of army followers flocked into the place, it was decidedly quiet and solemn in its aspect, notwithstanding a considerable trade in shipping Cumberland coal from its wharves. Some persons think the house where Ellsworth was shot worth stopping to look at; and the old Episcopal church at the head of the street is interesting as a fair specimen of what is called the "Queen Anne Architecture," so prevalent in many country churches of Virginia, most of which went to ruins after the tithing system was abolished.

Mount Vernon, below Alexandria some eight miles, has been so often described that I merely refer to it here in order to say that the war has seriously interfered with the receipts from visitors, and consequently delayed the improvements and conveniences which are so much needed, and which the Ladies' Association will undoubtedly complete as soon as possible.

XXXV.

THE FORTS.

IN the progress of this civil contest, the public are becoming but too familiar with fortifications of every description. Those around Washington are perhaps more carefully constructed and elaborately finished than any; and must long form a very prominent feature in every ride or drive about the city. To one who is unaccustomed to such structures, they seem to be wondrously massive and enduring, considering that they are built entirely of earth and trunks of trees. These works embrace a circuit of nearly forty miles, completely surrounding the City and Alexandria.

There are some fifty-six large forts, besides as many more smaller ones called batteries. The forts mount from ten to forty or fifty guns each; the batteries from three to twelve, making between eight and nine hundred guns in all. Some of these are one hundred pound Parrott guns, and several two hundred pound guns are ordered, and are to be placed in the two batteries at Rozier's Bluff and Jones's Point, twin forts on opposite sides of the river, a short distance below Alexandria. The forts and

batteries are further connected by rifle pits, about seven feet high, so that every access is swept by large guns or muskets commanding every valley. The bridges, which cross the river, are protected by *têtes de pont*. All the works are of earth, with secure bomb proofs to protect the men in case of an attack; and nearly every fort is provided with a well of excellent water. To manœuvre one of the cannon properly some twenty men are required, for relays, &c., so that the reader can form an idea of the number needed to man all the works. It is estimated by military authority that twenty-five thousand men with these facilities could resist an attack of one hundred thousand, and that fifty thousand could resist any force which could be brought against it. A fine military road, constructed by Lt.-Col. Alexander of the Engineer corps, through the valleys behind the works, and out of observation of an enemy, connects the forts north of the Potomac, so that, in case of attack, troops could rapidly be concentrated at any one point without marching through the city.

The forts were at first named mostly after States, cities, and Revolutionary heroes, but by degrees the names are being changed so as to perpetuate in this way the memory of offi-

cers of distinction who have fallen in the war. The following are some of the names :

North of Potomac: Forts Sumner, Mansfield, Bayard, Simmons, Gaines, Reno, Kearney, De Russy, Stevens, Slocum, Totten, Slemmer, Bunker Hill, Saratoga, Thayer, and Lincoln; and Batteries Smeade, Kimball, Parrott, and Cameron.

East of Eastern Branch Potomac: Forts Greble, Carroll, Snyder, Stanton, Baker, Davis, Dupont, Meigs, and Mahan; and Batteries Ricketts and Wagner.

South of the Potomac: Forts Marcy, Ethan Allen, C. F. Smith, Beunet, De Kalb, Corcoran, Haggerty, Woodbury, Whipple, Cass, Tillinghast, Craig, and Albany.

To visit all these forts would take much time, and, so far as the construction and armament are concerned, a sight of one gives a very good idea of all to an unprofessional observer, but there is great variety of position, and the views to be obtained from some richly repay for a series of rides or drives in the afternoon of a summer's day. It will be strange, indeed, if, in some of the works, the visitor does not find pleasant acquaintances among the officers, though we hope that it may not always be necessary to keep them as well manned as at present. Perhaps Fort Ellsworth near Alexan-

dria, Fort Whipple near Arlington, Fort Ethan Allen near the Chain Bridge on the south side of the river, Fort Sumner on the north side, Fort Reno, formerly Pennsylvania, near Tenallytown, Fort Stevens, formerly Massachusetts, at the intersection of the Fourteenth street and Seventh street roads, Fort Lincoln on the boundary line near Bladensburg, and Forts Meigs and Stanton, across the Eastern Branch Bridge, may be regarded as representing the most important points. For a long time the forts on the south side, toward Alexandria, were regarded as the most attractive, chiefly because they were the first erected, and are nearer Upton's Hill and other places at times occupied by the rebels, but partly no doubt because they are more difficult of access, passes being required to cross the river, as well as to enter the fort. Yet the works on the west and north are quite as attractive from size, construction, and position. A drive out over the Red Hill road to Fort Reno at Tenallytown brings one to the highest ground in the city. From this you pass, by the military road, in the rear of numerous smaller batteries, to the immense area of Fort Sumner, from the top of which you may look up the river for a long distance, and see many of the works on the Virginia side. Thence a short drive brings you to the

Chain Bridge, whence you may return to Georgetown by the Aqueduct, of which we have spoken elsewhere, or by the river side. The drive from this point, around by the forts on the Virginia side to the Potomac Bridge, should be the occasion of a separate excursion. Fort Stanton also overlooks a wide extent of country.

The various contrivances for sheltering men and powder, the fearful implements, in the shape of bombs, case, grape and canister shot, and hand grenades, must be seen to be understood. To a civilian, the first impression will invariably be one of wonder that such works can ever be taken by any force, and he will be surprised to learn how large a proportion of the missiles do no damage. At Vicksburg it is said that some of the hand grenades were caught as they were falling, and hurled back at the enemy.

In the construction of these forts it has been necessary to take possession of private property on very short notice, and to an enormous extent. An estimate has been made, showing that, if the Government were to undertake to pay for such damages, wherever they have occurred all over the country, a thousand millions of dollars would be required. About twenty thousand acres of woodland have

been felled around Washington. Much of the work on these structures has been done by soldiers, but latterly laborers have been hired for the purpose. It is useless to moralize on the good which might have been done with the money these forts have cost, used in other ways. Such reflections apply to everything which pertains to War, yet the very effort which its gigantic undertakings calls forth, and the development of the resources of a people and a country, often furnishes in the end some compensation for future generations; though this is but poor comfort to those who are living in the midst of its sacrifices of blood and treasure.

Many will remember what a sensation was created by the erection of the fortifications around the city of Paris, and which doubtless contributed to the downfall of Louis Philippe. It was said he had caused the guns to be so planted that they could be fired upon the city; with what truth we cannot say. They were probably intended by that king as a protection from foreign foes, mindful of the capture of Paris on a former occasion by the allied armies. Little did the writer, when he visited those works in process of construction, imagine that he would ever see a similar chain around the American capital. Those at Paris are of

stone, some sixty in number, and constructed in the most substantial manner, and are now used mainly as barracks for the immense army always quartered in and around that city. Some of those at Washington will probably be converted to similar uses. Others, it is to be hoped, deserted and grass-grown, will be mementos of this terrible struggle for the principles of our Government!—places where children may play and lambs may skip by the mouths of rusty mortars and dismantled guns. Connected as they are by the military road, a little expenditure in trees and shrubbery would make them, in time, part of a beautiful and picturesque drive—the boulevards of Washington. God speed that day!

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